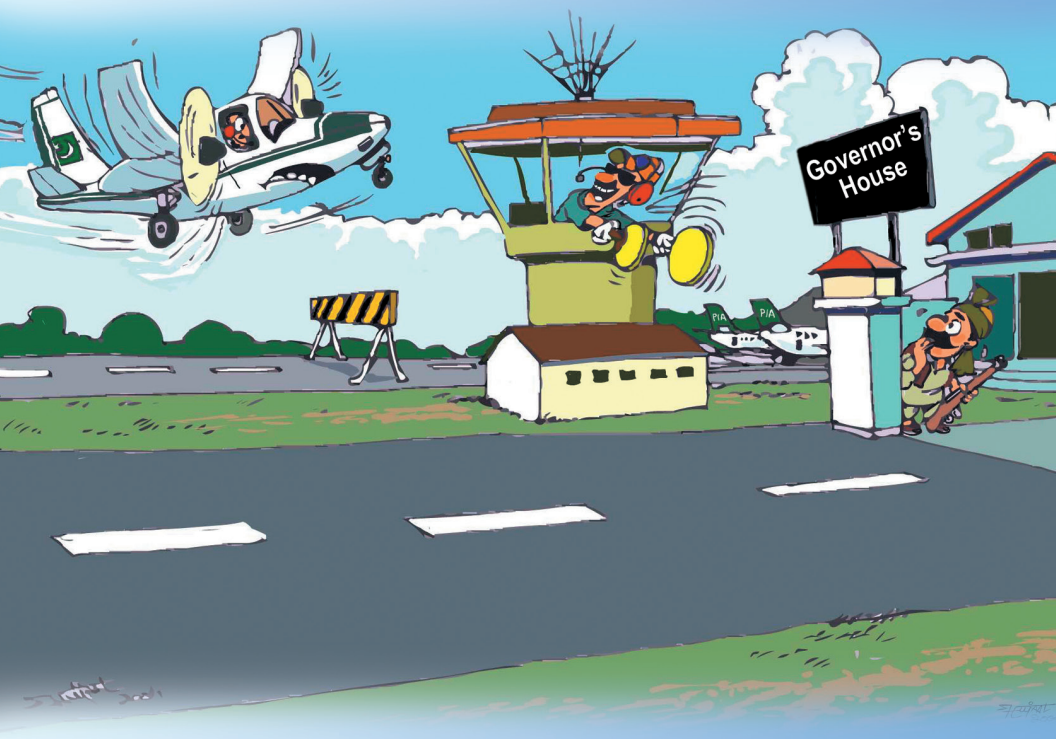
The Air Pockets



A tale of Pakistan Air Force through anecdotes

PAF BOOK CLUB

THE AIR POCKETS

A Tale of Pakistan Air Force
through anecdotes

PAF BOOK CLUB

FOREWORD

I am very pleased to write the foreword to a unique book that is different from any other book written earlier about the PAF---- *"The Air Pockets"*.

The very mention of Pakistan Air Force gives rise in the mind to images of "knights in the shining armour"; pilots dressed in their anti-G suits running out of the air defence alert hut, fully armed jet fighters tearing down the runway with after burner trails, quick intercepts to engage and shoot down unwelcome intruders; glittering graduation ceremonies on the parade square followed by eye-catching, thrilling aerobatics or formation fly-bys on national occasions; all account for the hardest imaginable combat training all the time. And that is what PAF is mostly known for--- hard core professionals---nothing but the truth.

But then that is not the whole truth. We are also hard core humans…as human as anyone else. We laugh, we smile, we enjoy a joke---we create jokes, we make errors, funny errors, as funny as these could be; at times unthinkably funnier. Of course our lighter side mostly remains hidden deep in our hearts. The purpose of compiling these anecdotes was to bring them to surface so that the older generations could recollect their fond memories and enjoy these events while the younger ones, besides enjoying, could learn about traditional PAF values that they have inherited from a legacy of hard core humans and professionals.

In 2002, the then DCAS (Training), AVM Abdul Razzaq, decided to explore sharing the lighter side of our lives with the nation in general and PAF personnel in particular. For the task, he spotted Wg Cdr (Retd) Zafar Iqbal, an unseemly choice, knowing that the Wg Cdr had a reputation of being a serious gentleman with humour nowhere part of his personality. In order to prove that all reputations are not true, he really put his heart and soul into the work, crisscrossed the country a few times, located and reached out to all individuals who were willing to contribute to the project. When I took over as the Air Chief, I found the text had been almost completed. I instructed DCAS (Training), AVM Sohail Aman, to personally edit the manuscript and get it printed. He ended up spending long hours despite his otherwise very busy schedule and edited the entire manuscript, word by word without annoying the author.

I have read the completed text and enjoyed every single anecdote. It is hilarious, witty and highly readable. I recommend this book to all air force personnel, especially the younger generation. Not only it is great fun to read The Air Pockets, it connects us with the air force of yesteryears. We can travel down the time tunnel and enjoy a big laugh in the company of air force icons. We can see them flying their air machines, ride with them in their cockpits and see them building the air force brick by brick. We can share their set of values and be part of the air force history. Along with the fun and wit, most of the stories carry very important lessons for our younger generations - inside as well as outside the air force. They highlight great values of integrity, honesty, teamwork, decision-making, courage, ingenuity, character, leadership, humanity and sacrifice. These are all vital building blocks of our air force. We must not only have fun and imbibe these values, but also transfer them to the upcoming flag bearers of the PAF.

I wish to dedicate this book to the memory of the Shaheed AVM Abdul Razzaq, who conceptualized, initiated, and supported this

great work. Air Marshal Masood Akhtar deserves a special mention for "getting" Shujaat to create some very expressive cartoons. I also commend the superb work done by Wg Cdr Zafar Iqbal. I appreciate his unprecedented efforts in locating the individuals and then travelling from residence of one retired officer to another's in search of all these anecdotes; sometimes eliciting one odd anecdote, but mostly returning empty-handed. As he says, "All those who fed me a meal, left me hungry for a story. The stories came to me from those who served me no more than a cup of tea."

Go on and enjoy reading.

Air Chief Marshal
Tahir Rafique Butt
Chief of the Air Staff, PAF

January, 2013

PREFACE

After my retirement from the Pakistan Air Force in 1993, I joined Shaheen Air International, TCS Aviation, Pakland Cement and again Shaheen Air International. Nothing seemed to work out for me in life and the then DCAS (Training) Air Vice Marshal Abdul Razzaq invited me for an informal chat to his office in 2002, and forced me to take a job with Training Branch. I told him that I was no more used to working in excess of two hours a day. He smiled and said that he was happy with that but his plans would involve me to the fullest. And, in view of an added attraction of having four course mates working in the AHQ at that time, I accepted the offer.

A few days after my taking the job, the DCAS (Trg) called me to his office. I found the Air Vice Marshal and his Education Chief, Air Commodore Tariq Qureshi, huddled together in a conference. Immediately, the Air Vice Marshal asked me if I was prepared to undertake a special project. “We have decided to write the anecdotes of the Air Force and you are the author. Do you feel up to the task? “

I began to laugh.

“I even have a name for it”, I said. “The Air Pockets”.

We decided to contact the retired officers of the PAF all around the country. I began to collect their addresses and phone numbers and the AVM sent out a letter requesting these officers to recount any funny incidents or anecdotes regarding the PAF that they were involved in or knew about. The first to respond was the first Pakistani

C-in-C Air Marshal Asghar Khan. Air Marshal Nur Khan said, "He was too serious a man to even know what the word anecdote meant". Few officers wrote back. Then I decided to work the phone. So every afternoon as the Air Vice Marshal left his office, I would occupy his table and begin to call the retired officers from the list made available to me. Most of them complained that the sands of time had erased their writing skills, but they would be happy to receive me at their homes and speak to me. Mostly I would leave the office after sunset.

The retired PAF officers generally congregate in three cities; Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi. So I made my travel plans accordingly, and as I proceeded through my yatras to the former air force officers, a specific pattern began to emerge. Any officer who feted me over lunch or dinner, positively refused to offer me any anecdotes, saying that whosoever told me that they were funny people did not speak the truth. I found that the sands of time had not only erased their writing skills, but their memories too. One to all, they were great hosts, but no stories came out of them. The anecdotes came mostly from the guys who served me only a cup of tea.

Another paradox was that the guys famous for their wit throughout the air force had no witty stories up their sleeves. Sometimes, I would spend hours after hours taping their conversation, downing one cup of tea after another, sitting patiently and waiting. No stories. Others suddenly became very busy for the whole week. Most of the humour came from people with reputations of having never smiled in their lives.

After having worked for nearly six months, very little content was on my table. And then came the Kohat crash. It killed the Air Chief Mushaf Ali Mir and it killed my old friend-DCAS (Trg), Air Vice Marshal Abdul Razzaq, too. My name was on the manifest as well, but I did not board the plane because Wing Commander Abdul Hameed Qureshi in Kohat whom I was to interview for this book had

refused to entertain me due to the CAS' visit. With Abdul Razzaq's death, the project nearly died. I had no heart to write humour after such a tragedy. The new DCAS (Trg),
Air Marshal Masood; however, convinced me to complete the project in honour of the late AVM's memory. He further supported the project by getting some fantastic cartoons made by the famous cartoonist Shujaat, who took time from his very busy assignment in Qatar only due to his enormous respect for the Air Marshal.

This time around we decided to check with serving officers as well. The journey took me to almost all the PAF Bases. It was a great pleasure to meet the new officers and listen to their wonderful stories. I enjoyed every moment of my travel.

The book was completed by 2006, but it just lay there, mainly due to writing the PAF Air Power Doctrine and the True North for the cadets. When Air Chief Marshal Tahir Rafique Butt was designated as the new Chief, I reminded him of the project. He was very kind to immediately direct his Training Chief, Air Vice Marshal Sohail Aman to edit the book and have it printed. And despite being extremely busy, the AVM read the book personally word by word and edited it to bring it to its present printable status. He remained in contact with me for numerous clarifications and did tremendously well to retain the original humour and the facts. The AVM was ably assisted by Air Cdre Waheed Tariq and Sqn Ldr Iffat Kalsoom.

While crediting AVM Abdul Razzaq, who had conceived this project, I must also thank all the contributors and all those who helped us on the way to completing this unique book. I sincerely apologise for the delay. Most certainly, the responsibility is mine; though I have tried my best and very blatantly to shift the blame towards everybody else.

Zafar Iqbal
Wg Cdr (Retd)

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Only we could...

THE CHECK RIDE

Air Marshal Najeeb Akhtar

Wing Commander Amanullah was an experienced pilot commanding a Chinese F-6 fighter Squadron. His squadron was based in Sargodha. He had been medically unfit and had not flown for over thirty days. As he became fit to fly, the training unit in Mianwali was requested to send a dual seat aircraft with an instructor pilot to give a check ride to Amanullah. Squadron Leader Sulaiman Nabi jumped into a U-MIG and flew across to Sargodha. After landing, he headed to Amanullah's Squadron, and upon being told that the pilot was busy elsewhere, walked across the road to another squadron to see his friends and have chit chat.

Now Sulaiman Nabi had a twin brother by the name of Niaz Nabi who was also a pilot in the PAF and was posted on a non-flying assignment at Sargodha. He learnt through ATC that a U-MIG had arrived from Mianwali bearing his brother Sulaiman Nabi. He walked across the tarmac to meet him. At about the same time, Amanullah learnt about the U-MIG and Nabi's arrival and reached the aircraft promptly to get over with his check ride. Seeing Niaz Nabi standing next to the U-MIG, he concluded that HE must be Sulaiman Nabi who had come to check him out and smiled at him.

"Oh Hullo Nabi, how are you? Are you ready to fly?", asked Amanullah.

"Of course, I am, always". He replied happily.

Niaz Nabi, on the ground job hungering for flying, not knowing why the U-MIG was there, thought that Amanullah was going flying routinely and that he, Niaz Nabi, was being offered a joyride.

So Amanullah got into the front cockpit thinking that Niaz Nabi was going to check him out and Niaz Nabi got into the rear cockpit nonchalantly for the joyride.

Thus began the check ride!

Amanullah, having flown U-MIG before, was comfortable enough to use his check list to start up the aircraft and taxied out, while Niaz Nabi having been granted permission to fly from the rear cockpit cheerfully enjoyed himself. Short of take-off, Amanullah asked Nabi if he was 'OK' for take off. Behind him Nabi looked outside, cleared the approach and gave his okay. Amanullah took that as approval from the check-pilot, released brakes, opened full power and bolted down the runway. Soon they were airborne and climbing away. "How is it going", Amanullah enquired of the check pilot wanting to know about his take off procedures. "Wonderful, very nice", replied the joy rider thinking he was being asked about the degree of enjoyment being afforded to him. "What altitude you want me to climb to? Twenty thousand feet OK?" asked the pilot under check. "Sure, no problem", replied the joy rider. Level at twenty thousand, Amanullah asked the check pilot what aerial exercises he would like to be performed. Looking down at the winding river Jehlum, Nabi told Aman to go ahead and do as he liked. Amanullah was very pleased with the friendly check pilot.

As Sulaiman Nabi, the check pilot, enjoyed himself in the crew room- sipped tea, chatted with his friends and waited for Amanullah. Amanullah, meanwhile, went through his check ride, high in the sky performing different exercises and putting the aircraft through its paces while Niaz Nabi sat pleased and happy in the rear cockpit. Everybody was happy … an excellent situation indeed.

After thirty minutes, Amanullah asked the check pilot if he had done well in his check ride. A very relaxed Niaz Nabi jumped up in the rear cockpit and hit the canopy.

'What check ride?'

'This check ride. How have I done?'

"Sir, I_____ I, you _____ you mean this is a check ride?"

"Of course – Do you think this is a joyride?"

"Believe you me that is exactly what I think."

"What! Are you not Sulaiman Nabi?"

"No, I'm his brother Niaz Nabi"

"Oh – Oh you're who? Niaz – Niaz! What are you doing here?"

"You told me to hop in. I thought you're going to fly a routine sortie – so I hopped in."
"Where is Sulaiman Nabi then, who's supposed to check me out? Dammit I haven't flown for three months now."
"Sir – three months? I haven't flown for thirteen months.

An urgent message was sent to Sargodha tower to locate Sulaiman Nabi. Sulaiman, meanwhile, having enjoyed his tea and being told that Amanullah had gone to the aircraft, had returned to the tarmac. To his shock he found that his U-MIG had been taken for a ride by two de-current riders. While he tried to get his wits about, Amanullah and Niaz Nabi came back in one piece and returned his U-MIG to him, also in one piece.

Next time round Sulaiman Nabi brought his own cup of tea with him from Mianwali and never left his U-MIG alone.

HALF SHAVE

Air Commodore Tayyab N Akhtar

On successful completion of the fighter conversion course on T-33A aircraft, the 46th GD (P) Course was sent on a hiking course from Gilgit to Skardu. Airlifted from Chaklala to Gilgit, we walked towards Skardu by road, covering about 15 miles each day and camping out in the open. It was early spring and at places a little snow still remained.

During the hike, most of us decided not to shave. On the last stretch of the journey, we were informed that a C-130 would pick us up from Skardu. This was a heartening news as Eid was just a few days away, and the weather was also unpredictable. The Silk Road had not yet been built, so returning by road was almost impossible.

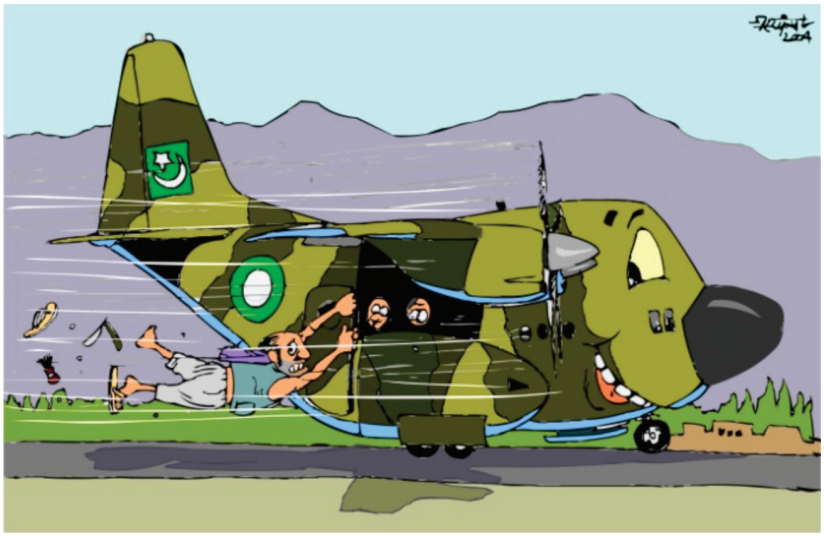
We spent the last night around the frozen lake at Shangri-La. On reaching Skardu airport, most of us headed for the only barber shop

for a shave. In a little while, the C-130 came on top, air dropped the supplies and landed at Skardu.

A message was sent to the barber's shop that as the weather was closing in, the aircraft would make a running pick up and everyone must hurry.

At this moment, one of our course mates was having his shave done and the barber had shaved one side of his face by now. On hearing the C-130 land, he threw aside the towel from around his neck, ran out of the shop and rushed towards the aircraft, the barber running behind him for his money. In a record time the lithe officer was on the tarmac, onto the steps and inside the aircraft cabin, lather dripping from one side of his face. The barber, who was in no mood of losing his two rupees, gave hard chase and almost got his name into the Guinness Book of World Records. Almost … for as he reached the tarmac, ground crew removed the steps and the loadmaster pressed the button to close the aircraft rear door.

The rest of the mischief was perpetrated by the pilot. The door was yet not fully closed and there still existed a strong possibility of



the razor-wielding, money-chasing barber to make a force entry into the plane and extract his remuneration at razor point from the half-shaven defaulter. As the barber's extended fingers were about to grasp the plane's door, the fun-loving

C-130 pilot opened power on all four engines. The barber's fingers now were touching the body of the plane – and that is as far as he got. As the prop-wash built up by the engines grew, the barber became almost airborne. He felt the aircraft and his hard earned two rupees slip through his fingers. After the little hurricane generated by the C-130 swirled towards him, the barber managed to make a soft touchdown and taxied away to his shop in tears; feeling robbed.

The barber never learnt who had actually robbed him. But henceforth he would shave only those pilots who paid him in advance. Let the risk be theirs; so what if someone received only Half-a-Shave.

AOC VISITS MURID

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

I was detailed to fly Air Vice Marshal Shabbir Hussein Syed, the Air Officer Commanding Northern Air Command and the Base Commander Peshawar, from Peshawar to Murid for the annual visit by the AOC. My co-pilot was Flying Officer Shamim, a good pilot and a dutiful officer. Expecting the satellite commander, only a Flying Officer, at Murid to have his hands full with the top brass's activities, Shamim took the 'Scrabble' along to keep us busy.

It was a warm October morning. Shamim, acting as the captain for the leg from Peshawar to Murid took off and steered south-east. Within 25 minutes, we descended and headed towards the runway at Murid. The control tower being unmanned, we flew over the runway waggling wings from side to side, following the standard no R/T procedure and came in for the landing. After touchdown, we turned around and taxied towards the parking area at the beginning of the

runway. To my surprise, I found nobody to marshal the aircraft. I was equally surprised when I saw nobody at hand to receive the two onboard senior officers. Shamim parked the aircraft nicely and shut down both the engines ---- still nobody. I looked out rather gingerly, opened the cabin door, walked onto the wing and stood aside for the commanders to get out. The place looked like Marie Celes – absolutely abandoned without a soul on board. For the first time in his life, the AOC seemed to be at an absolute loss. He looked inquiringly towards the Base Commander, Air Cdre Sajid. Murid being the subordinate unit of Peshawar, Sajid was to be held responsible for whatever was going on. In this case; however, he could be held responsible for absolutely nothing because 'absolutely nothing' was going on there. He looked embarrassed, terribly. The Air Vice Marshal didn't know what to say to his subordinate – Air Commodore didn't know what answers to give to his superior's unasked questions. If they were in air combat with the enemy, they would have known what to do – but here there was no enemy – at least not within sight, yet.

More out of necessity of keeping the embarrassment level lower than of anything else, I got back into the cockpit. I tried to raise the tower-yet knew all along that there was nobody in there. We simply stayed in the cockpit. It was definitely safer inside.

Before anyone could decide how to handle this most unusual situation, another extraordinary turn of events took place. While the two senior commanders were prowling the tarmac with their heads bowed in meditation and hands clasped behind their backs like expectant fathers, another prowler appeared on the scene.

It was a labourer attired in a vest and a dhoti with a patka on his left shoulder. He was walking along the edge of the runway and had he maintained his course, he would have harmlessly exited the danger zone within half a minute or so. But apparently, the lack of protocol for the commanders that needed no words to be described, touched the simple man's heart. Without any warning, he executed a hard ninety degree left turn and, right hand extended, launched himself at the senior most officer present. Before the Air Vice Marshal could

even realize what was going on, the labourer had approached within handshaking distance, and not finding a reciprocating hand, decided to go the full way.

I could not see if he went the French way and kissed the Air Vice Marshal on his cheeks but he definitely went ahead and embraced the Air Vice Marshal. I also do not know if he uttered any welcoming words, but could see that the Air Vice Marshal could not digest this 'out of the book Protocol' and was rendered absolutely speechless. I am quite certain that he would have fallen on the ground if touched only with a straw. A shocked Air Commodore Sajid ran towards the Air Vice Marshal to effect a rescue operation. The labourer, perhaps, interpreted this as exuberance on the part of this officer to return his gesture of welcome. He released the squirming Air Vice Marshal and locked the on rushing Air Commodore in his embrace. Now, it was Sajid's turn to squirm. When he finally managed to twist out of the labourer's steel grasp, he said some words to the poor labourer whose steam deflated at once. He looked distraught and heartbroken. Quietly, he lowered his head, turned around, apparently dried a few tears with his patka, and slowly made his way out of the arena. The poor soul simply couldn't understand why his protocol had been so rudely turned down when none had been provided to them by anybody else. As a safety measure against the senior officers' wrath possibly spilling over to us,

I sank lower into the cockpit and asked Shamim to sink lower as well. Out of sight, out of mind!

Tension reigned supreme in the atmosphere. The labourer's attempt to provide protocol to the visitors had introduced an electric thunderstorm as well. Time simply refused to pass, nerves were about to break and fate of the Forward Operating Base seemed to hang in the balance.

Suddenly, a loud "phut phut – phut phut" was heard. I raised my periscope and spied an old perhaps 1901 ½ vintage motorcycle crossing the runway. Its once cool black colour had faded, both wheels seemed to be gyrating in opposite directions and a cloud of dark black

smoke travelled behind it. Somewhere in the middle sat a young Flying Officer, looking like a knight in shining armour. He parked his antique machine only a few feet from the top brass, stood to something like an attention position and offered a kind of a salute. The Air Vice Marshal simply turned his back on him. The Air Commodore approached. I held the cockpit door ajar to be privy to the dialogue between the two commanders; Commands of the FOB and the MOB.

"Sir what can I do. The jeep sent to me from Rawalpindi cannot be started since this morning. The jeep given to me from Peshawar cannot be started since yesterday."
"Then how do you propose to transport the AIR VICE MARSHAL and myself to the Operations Room."
"Sir the only thing moving on the Base right now is this motorcycle. First the AIR VICE MARSHAL can sit behind me and ride to the ops room; then I'll come back and you can sit behind me and we'll ride together. And finally, I'll transport the pilots – one by one."

I quickly shut the cockpit door and sank low and out of sight. The Base Commander was sure of what had to be done to this very cool, protocol breaching, motorcycle riding Flying Officer. His 23 years of life had to be ended there and then. He contemplated murder. He only could not decide on the mode of his execution. Should he kill in cold blood or hot blood? Should he kill him with his bare hands or just stare him to death? Should he order a Field General Court Martial or ---- the youngster was lucky. Suddenly, he yelled and pointed towards the plume of thick black smoke rising from across the runway. "Sir, I think the old jeep from Peshawar has started, finally". Everybody looked in the direction pointed to. When the old jeep came within sight, everyone was as engrossed as a weary desert traveller looks at real water after having gone through many mirages. I believe that this syndrome saved the Flying Officer's life. Everyone's relief was total – the spell was broken – the breach of protocol, temporarily forgotten.

I don't know how did the inspection go? I only remember that Shamim and I just sat on a hot and humid October tarmac under the tail of the aircraft, playing scrabble and drinking lassi brought to us by a kind MODC guard. When the Commanders arrived after two hours, miraculously the Flying Officer was still alive. We took off for Peshawar. The cabin stayed very quiet throughout the flight.

C-IN-C IN FRANCE

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

On another occasion, Air Marshal Asghar Khan C-in-C PAF travelled to France on a state visit. When his VIP Bristol Freighter landed at Orly Paris, nobody was there to receive him as well.

But he was luckier – Air Marshal Asghar Khan and his wife walked across the tarmac and took a cab to the hotel. The reception had been arranged at LA BORGUET, Paris.

ACCOLADES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Air Marshal Najeeb Akhtar

In early nineties, PAF had started looking for various hitherto untapped sources of armament and weapons; among these was South Africa with which we did not have diplomatic relations. So, I flew to London aboard a normal PIA flight, acquired a ready made South African passport and travelled to Johannesburg on the South African carrier. During the visit, I was informed one evening that the South African Air Force Chief, a Brigadier wanted me to meet him. I immediately sat down and prepared some talking points, mainly on the PAF, for visit the next day.

When I arrived at the Air Force HQ, I was received with a friendly smile by the Brigadier. After a nice cup of coffee when I began to speak about the Pakistan Air Force, the Brigadier politely interrupted saying that he knew a lot about the PAF and so did all his pilots. I was surprised and wanted to know the reason for his air force knowing the PAF so well.

"Well you see", he spoke. "You know that we have been flying Mirages for a long time. About 20 years ago, we were involved in a war with Angola. The Angolan air force flew the Mig 21 Bis aircraft. We knew nothing about the tactics used by Mig 21 Bis against the Mirages. We contacted the Americans and they sent us their manual on fighting Mig 21 Bis. Then we talked to the Israelis and they gave us a handwritten manual – titled, "How a Mig 21 Bis ought to fight a Mirage." It was authored by some unknown Pakistani pilot serving in Egypt for Syria. The write-up somehow fell into the hands of Mossad, was handed over to the Israeli Air Force that adopted it in their fighter squadrons and they gave it to us. We also found it most useful and our pilots developed fighting tactics accordingly. "You see we know about your air force and your pilots already". I felt tremendous joy at this compliment paid to an unknown colleague and to the Pakistan Air Force in that corner of the world.

The coffee had never tasted more delicious!

THE TRIAL I

Air Vice Marshal Yunis

Back in 1958, Flight Safety meetings were held at Air Headquarters Mauripur and various air incidents discussed, the offending pilots were made to stand up and answer for their deeds. In one such meeting, C-in-C Air Marshal Asghar Khan was in the chair once while Air Commodore Nur Khan sat beside him. The first pilot to be brought to book was – Amjad H Khan who had ejected from

F-86 after running out of fuel. As Amjad was being grilled a young Flying Officer by the name of Younis, who a year later would acquire international fame by shooting down an Indian Canberra, stood to the side awaiting his turn. While landing at Peshawar runway 17, Younis had mowed down three runway lights before coming back on the runway. He had already got his piece of roasting from his Flight Commander, Squadron Commander and Base Commander. Again, he was in the dock. As Younis rose, Nur Khan immediately asked him as to why he had gone off the runway. Younis, the youngster was up to the brim. He replied that he had already answered that question many times – and it was that he didn't know why – Nur Khan would not take that for an answer and again repeated his question more forcefully. The Flying Officer repeated his stance. Nur Khan didn't back down and spoke angrily, "I still don't understand why – why did you land on the katchaa".

"Come on Nur Khan. Get off the boy's back".
Interrupted the C-in-C. He was just trying to leave enough runway for his No 2 to land".

THE TRIAL II

Air Marshal Najeeb Akhtar

In 1968, I was posted at PAF Base, Sargodha and was as carefree as a young Flying Officer is liable to be. One Monday morning, as we broke off from the weekly Base parade and headed towards the Flying Wing, Flg Off Farooq Zapata and I fell in step. Zapata took out his cigarette box and as per his habit, offered me a cigarette first, then lit one himself. Two things we did not notice and regretted almost immediately. First, we happened to be passing very close by a line of F-6 aircraft parked next to the parade square – smoking within 50 feet of any aircraft is strictly prohibited and we were in definite violation

of the rule. And second; committing any violation within the line of sight of Wing Commander N A Siddiqui, the Base Operations Officer, was an offence, non-pardonable under all sections of the PAF Act – and we were within his line of sight or rather his gun sight.

"Come here you two" he fired away, "Give me your Pak numbers. You are on charge for smoking within 50 feet of an aircraft". Wing Commander N A Siddiqui was not the one to delay anything.

Next day, soon after the morning briefing, the two of us were summoned by Group Captain Bill Lateef, the OC Flying Wing. Everyone watched from behind the half closed door and the half open windows as we were marched into his office under escort. We were two very young and very tense Flying Officers expecting the worst we could. However, we were in luck though we didn't know that, yet.

Bill Lateef sat in his chair, cap on his head, displaying an imposing figure (All Officers Commanding Flying Wings become imposing). He raised his eyes and spoke.

"You two have been charged for smoking within 50 feet of an aircraft. Is the charge true?"
"Yes sir", we spoke in unison.
"How do you know that you were within fifty feet?", he enquired.
"Sir we know, It was obvious."
"What do you mean by obvious. Did you measure the distance?". He said.
"No Sir, but" --- we didn't know which way the wind was blowing.
"But, what – I cannot and will not punish you for a crime unless its veracity has been established. This court will move to the scene of the crime and then arrive at a decision".

We all filed away to the tarmac where the aircraft, whose sanctity we had violated, was parked. Bill Lateef asked us to point out the exact spot where we were at the time of committing the crime. We pointed to the spot about twenty feet away from the aircraft and felt the sword sharpening – our foreheads dripping with sweat.

"What is the length of one pace?" Bill Lateef was asking.
"Two and a half feet, Sir"
"So how many paces in fifty feet?"
"Twenty Sir."

Bill Lateef began measuring the distance. He put his left foot forward then put his right foot in front of and adjacent to it. He moved his left foot and moved it up touching the right foot each pace measuring less than a foot. We watched in astonishment as twenty paces were measured meticulously at the end of which he was still one and a half pace short of the offended aircraft. According to 'Bill Lateef Measuring System circa 1968' "We had smoked more than fifty feet away from the aircraft.

The charge was dismissed.

It was learnt later that there was no love lost between the OC Flying Wing and the Base Operations Officer. This had resulted in the invention of Bill Lateef's measurement system.

THE THING

Squadron Leader Shoaib Alam

We were based at Peshawar as a B-57 detachment during the 65 War. Flight Lieutenant Shams, the pilot and I returned one night from our mission over India and hit the bed in the mess around 2 am to have a good sleep. The Indian Air Force, however, was not willing to play ball and therefore to disturb our sleep, sent in an air raid. We jumped out of our beds and dived into the trenches dug in the beautiful mess lawns. We were about six officers in the trench, waiting for all clear to sound. "Lo-Lo-Look – Look there", said one of the officers with his throat dry.

When we looked in the pointed direction, our throats went dry too. There was SOME THING – dressed in all white from top to bottom with a huge head, moving from side to side, but still travelling straight towards us. We all believed in ghosts and those who did not believe in them could see one in front of them. The stories of "Sar Kata' had travelled far and wide. Now we seemed to be facing the moment of truth. Shams and I had not felt so tense when we were on our bombing run over India a few hours ago.

'THE THING' kept on coming closer and moving sideways as well; we kept on getting frightened. When 'The Thing' approached within about ten yards, one of us raised his pistol and shouted."
'Halt or I'll shoot.'
To our surprise, 'THE THING' stopped.
'Who are you", yelled the now more confident officer,
"I am Lt Col xxx from GHQ," 'THE THING' replied. 'I have been assigned to look after security of the Base."
"Why are you dressed in all white?", he was asked.
"Oh, I was sleeping in my knickers" 'THE THING' said, "Due to Blackout I couldn't locate my sleeping suit. So, I wrapped my bed sheet around me."
"And what is on your head?"
"It is a pillow to save my head from an air attack", said 'THE THING' pointing upwards.
"And why were you gyrating from side to side?"
"Because I lost my glasses", answered 'THE THING' and fell into the trench.

We forgot all about the Air Raid

DUTIES OF STAFF OPERATIONS OFFICER

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

The pilots in the PAF are called GD (Pilots). GD stands for general duties which means that they could be assigned to perform various duties in addition to the flying duties. The nomenclature of the appointment could be deceptive too – for them and for others.

In 1989, I was posted from Air War College Faisal to Sargodha as Staff Operations Officer. It was rumoured that Staff Operations Officer (SOO) has no definite job to perform. He just drives around in his jeep – and just drives around. However, once I reported to my Base Commander Air Commodore P Q Mehdi (who later rose to the position of CAS), I found out what all an SOO was required to do, and what he is perceived to be doing.

A few months after performing my duties as SOO, my body parts cried out for rest and recreation. I, therefore, took my old faithful 1986 Suzuki FX and the still older faithful, excuse me, the younger faithful, my wife and the kids to Sakesar for a long weekend. While we were enjoying a stroll one evening, a young logistics officer fell in beside me, and his bride—a brand new inductee into the Air Force environment, started to converse with my wife. After the initial niceties the conversation between the two ladies took the usual course:-

"What do*es your husband do?"*

"He is a Supply Officer in Sakesar; and yours?"

"He is Staff Operations Officer at Sargodha. Have you got official accommodation yet?"

"Yes, but it is far away from the office. My husband has to take a ten minutes walk. But your house must be very close to the hospital."

"Close to the hospital – Why?"

'Oh didn't you say your husband performs operations on the staff officers."

That was not all.

In the same year, the Army held a huge exercise Zarb-e-Momin and the PAF supported it with exercise Hi-Mark. During these exercises, there were many high profile visits including one by the President of Pakistan and another by the Prime Minister, the lady.

Two days before the PM was due to visit Sargodha I received a call from the PM Secretariat, Islamabad.

"Is this the Operations Officer I am talking to?"

That's right. I look after the operations".

"And how long have you served?"

"Twenty years".

"OK, good. I hope you know that the PM is expecting her baby. Please ensure that all arrangements in your operations room are complete and please be at hand all the time. Your services may be needed at a very short notice. I am sure we can count on your experience".

I knew I was expected to do many things as the Operations Officer, but being a gynaecologist... and that too to the Prime Minister, ---.

YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE

Air Vice Marshal Rehmat Khan

The tribal people in Pakistan and elsewhere in the world have their own culture and rules. Fear is one word that does not exist in their Chambers or Oxford dictionaries. They have their own laws to define "Logical Decision" and "Bravery".

In 1950's, Miran Shah was an active PAF/RPAF Station housing Fury fighter aircraft. These aircraft routinely practiced air-to-ground rocket firing at the Miran Shah firing range. The range was located close to the town and tribals found it quite convenient to walk into the range, collect the empty rocket shells and use the metal as raw

material in the local armament industry. Since this high quality metal was being taken "gratis", the savings for collectors were large and this set up a competition amongst the tribals to be the first to pick up the empty shells. Various tactics were, therefore, considered by the tribal lot – be the early birds including positioning ball boys waiting on the sidelines --- Wimbledon style – and racing in soon after the aircraft had fired its rockets and pulled up. But the ultimate tactic that won the hearts of all and sundry amongst the tribes scared the daylights out of the pilots firing the rockets.

When the aircraft fire at the range, there are different targets for strafing and different for rocketing. The rocketing targets are mounds made of heaped mud twenty feet across and are called Pins – any hit anywhere on the pin is considered a Direct Hit (DH). The bravest tribals positioned themselves right in the centre of the pin before the aircraft started to run in for the attack, watched where the rocket was falling, began the chase almost immediately and would collect the empty shells within seconds of their arrival on the mother earth. As more and more tribals joined into the fray, the pilots began to discontinue their attacks for the fear of hitting and killing the tribals. The pilots protested to the Station Commander who protested to the Political Agent for loss of their training. The tribals also protested. They protested about being robbed off their lawful revenues. The Political Agent visited the Station and spoke to the pilots. They explained to him the danger the tribals were exposing themselves to. "They lie on the centre of the 'PIN' – how do you expect us to fire rockets". They offered simple sensible logic.

The Political Agent went back to the tribals "What danger – we thought that the mound is prohibited for them to fire upon. No one has ever hit the mound. It is the "Safe Island" in the range. Please – please tell the pilots not to worry and continue firing as accurately as before". The Political Agent relayed the message to the pilots. Next day, two furies flew together in close formation and unleashed their fury on the range. Many pins were hit.

The tribals discarded their latest SOP and fell back to the old tried out methods of shell collection.

MURIDPUR KA PIR

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

When I was flying in No 41 VIP Communication Flight based at Peshawar, one of my students Flight Lieutenant Asad Butt was deputed to Chaklala for flying the Piper Seneca – a twin engine belonging to the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission. Asad Butt would thus routinely fly Mr Munir Ahmad, the Chairman of PAEC to various locations in the country. Some of these sites did not support asphalt runways; instead the aircraft had to land on rolled strips. On one occasion, the Chairman wanting to visit one such site found his Piper unserviceable and requested the PAF for assistance. I was assigned to fly the Chairman on a B-95 Beech Baron – also a twin engine. For navigation to the site I asked my ex-student Asad Butt to fly as my co-pilot-cum-navigator. He readily agreed. Also he was a good company – even though he was a chain smoker, he always deferred to my anti-smoking habit pattern and we got along very well. Asad Butt gave me a comprehensive briefing on the "Airport" layout, how to locate it and how to land on the very short 'Kacchaa' strip. Then he briefed me on how to handle the local staff. Just leave them to me. "Say nothing and if you feel that you are being neglected a bit – please don't mind. They are used to handling only one pilot – me". Then he lowered his voice and spoke in a very conspiratorial tone, "One thing more sir – and please don't object. Don't ask for or drink water in front of them. Never. Drink only coke. I have told them that pilots' stomachs cannot accept water and that they drink coke only. I know, you don't consume cold drinks, but only for today. You see you'll be going there only once – while I have to go there very often. Don't spoil their habits. If you can't live without water – just visit the washroom; close the door and put you mouth to the tap". He extracted a firm Memorandum of Understanding from me on the subject, gave me a friendly smile and we were on our way.

Finding the runway was easy – landing on the short strip was not. I was used to landing on 9000 ft of concrete compared to 2800 ft of Kacchaa and it was the end of June. Temperature was a cool 46°C and the dust was kicking up, wind swirling. I stopped the aircraft 200 feet short of the fields, turned around and parked on the small tarmac. The Chairman PAEC disembarked and was gone in 30 seconds. Flight Lieutenant Asad Butt disembarked and was taken away in the next 30 seconds in a huge land cruiser. I was left stranded, alone and unassisted – a non-entity.

I had been warned yes, but this was totally unexpected. Asad Butt was being treated as a Pir would be by his devotees. The Pir had arrived and everybody had to stand down for him. I was to be no exception to the rule.

Fortunately, Asad Butt did make the exception. The glimmering Land Cruiser came to a halt within fifty meters and reversed. Asad Butt flung open the door, invited me in and smiled graciously. I smiled back knowingly and it signalled that I was game for the show. The murids, however, did not smile and the resentment or discomfort at this blasphemy showed in their eyes. But they could not dissent with the Pir. The Land Cruiser took us to the Officers' Club. The room was small and well cooled by an air-conditioner. I moved to the bed away from the door and lay down to rest. A stream of murids continued to pour in the room to shake Asad Butt's hand. Soon a crate of coke was brought to the room. Asad looked at me for confirmation of the MoU. As I nodded my commitment, the first of the cokes had already been popped open for him.

Later at a signal from the Pir, a sumptuous lunch was rolled in on a trolley. The time for the execution of the MoU had arrived. As agreed, I headed to the washroom, closed the door, and used my hands as a bowl to carry water to my mouth. Then I walked out and enjoyed my lunch with a COKE. On the other side of the table more cokes were being summarily dispatched to wash down the delicious food.

After lunch, while I rested, Asad Butt continued to receive his murids, non-stop. At about 2 PM, he was informed that the Chairman was ready to depart. Outside the Club, the Land Cruiser was waiting and once again the Pir was put in it and whisked away. Again it was his intervention that ensured my arrival at the aircraft. After we landed at Chaklala, Asad Butt thanked me profusely for lending strength to the legend that "Pilots" drink coke only. As a further courtesy, he took me to his room, opened the tap, and said, **"Here, Be my guest. Drink all the water you like – and take some with you to Peshawar as well"**.

THE DONKEY RUN

Air Vice Marshal Iftikhar A Gul

By middle eighties, PAF had acquired F-16s, yet the donkeys were around. They pulled the lawn mowers, carried bricks over their backs for construction work, ferried their owners and pulled the load carts behind them. PAF Peshawar like many Bases boasted of a number of donkeys at the Base at any time of the day. And when there are so many donkeys around, it is only logical to conclude that anyone of those could and would behave like a donkey at sometime or the other.

So here was this one pulling a cart behind it, galloping away in front of the F-86 flight line when the ass decided to act like a donkey. It suddenly bolted, somehow broke the cart animal linkage and headed straight towards one of the airplanes. God only knows what went through its mind. Did it wish to climb into the check, we'll never know? But in the end, it executed a 90° right turn, charged straight towards the nearest F-86, made a last minute course correction and rammed head on into the drop tank of the aircraft.

The impact caused a big dent in the drop tank and temporarily stunned the donkey. However, it got up in a minute, looked around and re-assessed the situation. Having dropped its external load, the

donkey found itself become more manoeuvrable. It ran all over the tarmac and went around the aeroplanes of its choosing, the technicians giving chase. Ultimately, it was the donkey wala who succeeded in out-manoeuvring the donkey and putting an end to its newly found freedom. Flight Lieutenant Iftikhar Gul, the Engineering Officer in charge of safety, followed his procedure of compiling the safety report.

The news of the incident found its way all the way to the Air Headquarters, Directorate of Flight Safety – but somehow the Base Commander, Peshawar got left out of the loop. He learnt of the occurrence after a few weeks during the Flight Safety Review at the Air Headquarters. After all the incidents had been discussed, Director Flight Safety went on to narrate the funny incident. Everyone laughed including Chief of the Air Staff – only Base Commander Peshawar did not. He did not find the incident funny at all.

The Base Commander's office at Peshawar was only two minutes run from the AHQ. Base Commander raced to his office and ordered all aircrew, engineers, squadron commanders and OC Wings into the Flying Wing briefing room. The Base Commander was angry and

showed it. He put all and sundry on the mat. After a long harangue on the merits and de-merits of donkey-use, he issued a non-revocable, non-negotiable ultimatum:

"And I want all donkeys to leave my Base by this evening. Period".

In pin drop silence the low-voiced response from the rear of the room came in loud and clear.

"Phir to Sara Base Khalee ho Jaiy Gaa."
(Then everybody will have to leave the Base)

PIRS IN THE AIR FORCE

Flg Off N A Bhatti

As a radio theory instructor in the Signals and Radar School of the Pakistan Air Force in Malir Cantonment in 1948, I taught the subject to trainees who were posted to various Air Force stations on completion of their training as wireless operators. Unfortunately, two or three fellows deserted from active service a few years later, and in spite of efforts to apprehend them, they simply vanished into the interior of Sindh. The last bit of news that reached me via "langar mail" (as the airmen's grapevine was called) was that they had taken along with them "Walkie-talkie" sets as the only asset they needed to establish themselves as Pirs.

The "Ziarat" at some place whose name sounded something like Tando Pajero, consisted of a large hedge of thorny branches enclosing two small huts. In one of them sat the barhe Pir Sahib (ex-Leading Aircraftman) and in the other the Chotte Pir Sahib. The latter would tell the "murid" to sit on the ground outside the enclosure and relay the preliminary interview proceedings to barhe Pir Sahib sitting in his own hut a hundred yards away, by using his "Walkie-Talkie".

Barhe Pir Sahib, on receiving the wireless message from within the folds of his voluminous embroidered 'chadar', would permit the 'murid' to enter the enclosure into his august presence and narrate what his problem was. Then, using his natural gift of the gab, he would issue a cock-and-bull advice to his 'murid' and ask him to leave. "Cash if you please", Chote Pir Sahib would demand at the entrance, the exact amount having been transmitted to him on the 'walkie-talkie'.

The last I heard about these two ex-trainees of mine, via the Signal Schools' "Langar Gazette", was in December 1950 when they were reported alive and kicking. Their 'Ziarat' was said to be flourishing with its green flags and gaudy tinsel decorating Barhe Pir Sahib's "hujra". Although warrants had been issued for their arrests, brave, indeed foolhardy, would have been the person to venture in the area in which they were revered.

From airmen to technocrat pirs! I wouldn't be surprised if they have by now made their pile and wound up as MNAs or Senators.

FROM TURKEY WITH LOVE

Air Marshal Najeeb Akhtar

When I graduated from PAF College Risalpur, the number of available T-33 aircraft in No 2 Sqn was not sufficient for our training due to wartime deployment. Eighteen pilots were, therefore, deputed to go to our brotherly country Turkey for training with the Turkish Air Force. The Base there had a system of using the T-33 simulator before actual flying. This helped the pilots to learn the basic procedures and polish their handling of on-ground and in-flight emergencies.

Normally, all emergencies were handled by going through a series of check-lists for re-checking the aircraft systems and getting the aircraft back to normal operation. Even serious emergencies like engine failure, fire warning or engine overheat merit a few steps to re-

check and re-evaluate the situation before deciding to take the extreme measure of bailing out from the aircraft.

We were a few weeks into the schedule of simulator training when we learnt that the Turkish Base Commander was coming to inspect our progress. One of us got into the simulator and the flight was on its way. In a moment, the Base Commander ordered the simulator instructor to give the student "Engine Failure". As the instruments began winding down, the student pilot started to go through the checklist procedure.

"What are you doing?", the Base Commander asked
"Sir, the checklist."
"No, checklist. You just bail out"
"Sir ?"
"You just bail out, OK."
"OK, Sir."

Now the next student got into the simulator and he was given the "engine overheat". "Retard the throttle" the student began, see if the overheat light goes out."

"What are you doing?", demanded the Base Commander.
"Sir, the checklist"
"No – you have a problem, you just bail out, OK
"Bail out, Sir."
"Yes, bail out."
"OK Yes, Sir."

And the next student got into the simulator. Another emergency given: another reading of the checklist and another intervention by the Base Commander and ordering of the one simple step – "Bail out."

Finally, the Base Commander decided to tackle the problem once for all. He collected all eighteen of us and said,

"Look, I have 56, T-33 aircraft lined up on the tarmac. If you bail out of two or three aircraft, the Americans will replace those immediately – no problem. But, I have only eighteen of you

guys here and it's my responsibility to return each of you safely to Pakistan. Should something happen to anyone of you, what answer I'II give to the brotherly Pakistan Air Force? So you have an aircraft malfunction, don't think again – hit the button and bail out."

Simulator flying became extremely easy thereafter.

HAZARDS OF A FREE RIDE

Flight Lieutenant Muhammad Rafique

Air Vice Marshal Atcherley was the Commander-in-Chief of Royal Pakistan Air Force in 1950. Air Headquarters, in those days, was at Mauripur, presently Masroor. Once on a weekend, he drove to RPAF Base Korangi Creek in his private car, to see some of his RAF colleagues staying there. On his way back, as soon as he left the Main Guard Room, he saw three small boys walking along the road. He was kind enough to give them a lift. While driving, he got very friendly with the boys. They laughed and talked with him throughout the way. One boy even took the liberty of moving his hands over bald head of Atcherley, saying, 'What a nice runway.' Air Vice Marshal Atcherley asked them different questions to become more familiar with them. To one question about their identity, the boys replied that they were Air Force Apprentices, undergoing training at Korangi Creek. When they reached Karachi Sadar and were dismounting, one of them asked Atcherley, "By the way, sir, who are you?"

"Oh! Just your Commander-in-Chief", he replied, waved his hand and sped away.

SECOND TIME ECHO

Group Captain Niaz Ahmed Sufi

Induction of Control and Reporting Centres (CRCs) in the PAF was a leap forward in the late seventies. Apart from other tactical benefits, this system presented the data of far-flung radars (maximum eight radars) in a unified way on the CRC consoles.

During the initial phase of induction, the operators faced certain very intriguing problems; one such problem was "Second Time Echoes". The radar energy reflected from a target well outside the coverage entered the receiver after a time lapse, ie when the subsequent pulse had already been fired. Therefore, sometimes, an aircraft flying 100 NM away was seen at 20 NM on the CRC console. "Second time Echo" was therefore, the talk of the town.

Wing Commander I U Khan was one of the lucky (or unlucky) guys who took over the command of a CRC unit. He was a man of few words, who spoke precisely - with clarity, brevity and wit together.

After a major air defence exercise, the weapon controllers of No 1 Sector were to assemble at Kirana SOC (Sector Operations Centre) for a debrief. During the debrief, it was apprehended that CRC controllers would be the main targets of criticism for many reasons but mainly for having reacted upon "Second Time Echoes", rather than the real targets.

I met Khan at Sargodha Officers' Mess, during the lunch. He was very gloomy and moved slowly. After a quick meal and a little chat with Khan, I drove to Kirana leaving him struggling with a boiled potato with his clumsy fork. As I entered the ops room at Kirana after a fifteen minutes drive, I was astonished to see I U already sitting amongst other controllers, holding his head between his hands. Highly intrigued, I said, "Sir, I had met you in the dining hall 15 minutes ago. I left you there struggling with a boiled potato and now I find that you are already here, how come?"

He looked up, yawned and said, quietly,

"That was my "Second time Echo"

TARGET 4

Group Captain Niaz Ahmed Sufi

Officer Commanding of a Low Looking Radar summoned a meeting immediately after an air defence exercise had been concluded. He was genuinely worried and so were all of us, as not a single target out had been picked up or intercepted even After Weapons Release (AWR). Not intercepting a raid is one thing which can have many reasons, but not picking up even one blip of a target, is a sin for which hell can break loose. Particularly so, when Air Commodore "Thapa", a terror, occupying the chair of AOC (Air Officer Commanding), was personally coming to attend the debrief.

As we assembled in his office, without any pep talk, the Officer Commanding said, "Now gentlemen, what is to be done about target 4, as we have not picked up a single blip on him". He paused to take a long puff, and continued, "I'll probably lose my job but what else"? I volunteered, "Sir, myself and the Unit Technical Officer (UTO) will give you a plausible reason after a while".

After a private session, we came out with a reason which read as under:

"There was a sudden build-up of a weather pocket around the target area which after having absorbed the maximum moisture, dropped and attenuated the reflected energy to a level which was below the threshold of discernibility, as such the receiver failed to produce a blip (even a single blip) on the radar scope". OC highly appreciated it and ordered all of us to wing up this reason so as to bring it on our finger tips.

After a few days, AOC Thapa was in the chair during the debrief and we all awaited the dooms when AOC would raise a question about Target 4. The first three targets had been intercepted, one BWR (Before Weapon Release) and two AWR (After Weapon Release). Target 4, my OC explaining on the board, the AOC looking intently, "was missed …" The OC very smoothly covered the well-rehearsed lines and chuckled.

The AOC got up from his chair and briskly walked up the stage, stood facing the OC only inches short of his stomach, looked right into the eyes and spoke through his teeth, "Target 4, never flew the mission. It was ground aborted" and walked out.

THE LEVER INTERCHANGE

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

No 41 VIP Communication Unit had a Beechcraft Twin Bonanza on its inventory. It was a low-wing twin-engine airplane. The seats were bench sofa type, three in the front and three in the rear. It didn't make much noise except when its door flew open during flight. It was easy to take off and easy to land – a nice bird to fly.

One day Flight Lieutenant Mustansar Sohail Toor was flying the Twin Bonanza to Sargodha from Peshawar. After flying for half an hour, Mustansar called finals to Runway 14 at Sargodha. He was cleared to land. He lowered the gears, slowed down to 120 knots, lowered the flaps that further reduced his speed to 100 knots and touched down beautifully at 90 knots. He taxied off from the runway and raised the flaps switch. The flaps did not come up. He recycled the flaps control. Nothing happened. After parking the aircraft, he reported the matter to the local maintenance unit who called the No 41 maintenance guys at Peshawar.

"Look! The flap motor is under the front seat. Simply make the connection direct. Flaps will come up. Let the aircraft come to Peshawar and make a flaps up landing. We'll fix up the aircraft here. **No big deal,"**

"No big deal," said the Sargodha guys.

The Sargodha guys arrived at the aircraft, raised the front seat and made the motor direct. The gears went up"

The flap motor was under the rear seat.

KHUSHI-TIME

Wing Commander Bahre-Kamal

Date: **5 Jan, 1981**
Pilot: **Self**
Pupil: **Flight Cadet Fazal**
A/C: **T-37/667**
Duty: **CD-1 (Air Experience / Familiarization)**

It was a beautiful sunny morning as I briefed my student Flight Cadet Fazal on his first mission in a T-37 aircraft. "I will demonstrate to you how to strap up and then I will do everything right from start up to switch off. Once airborne, I will show you the training area. I will also give you the controls so that you can have the feel of the aircraft. But basically this is just a 'Khushi Time' for you. So enjoy and ask as many questions as you feel like".

As we got airborne, I raised the gear handle to put the gears up. I could feel that the gears had gone up, but the warning light remained on. After making a closed circuit, I tried to recycle the gears but to my horror, the gear lever would not go down.

I passed low in front of the Mobile, which confirmed that the gears were up. Thereafter, I climbed to 5000 feet and tried all possible means to lower the handle but to no avail. Meanwhile, Flight Cadet Fazal, having got fed up with all this Khushi Time, started vomiting in the cockpit and as that was his idea of Khushi Time, he did not hold anything back. Having failed to lower the gears, I finally gave a call to the ATC to prepare the runway for a belly landing as I started to burn the extra fuel.

As I finally descended to circuit height and flew through, it seemed as if the whole Academy had lined up on the taxi track for some "Jalsa." Actually as the word spread that an aircraft was coming in for a belly-landing, everybody who could manage to, had reached the runway. One of my colleagues, Flight Lieutenant Arif Moeen even

had the time to go home and fetch his video camera to record the whole incident.

I flew through once flying at almost flare out height till end of the runway to familiarize myself with the part of runway where foam had been laid.

It was the smoothest touch down of my life and the aircraft stopped in a very controlled manner, but then the anticlimax. As I had switched off all electric power before touch down, the canopy had to be de-clutched, but the fire fighter who came running to the aircraft was too quick for me. Before I could react, he had already pulled the emergency 'T' handle. And there went the canopy - up in the air, and through the elevator - and fell on the runway.

As far as Flight Cadet was concerned, he decided that he had had enough of "Khushi Time". He is now an air defence weapons controller.

"Safe and sound – on the ground".

PERMISSION DENIED

Air Commodore M Akbar Shahzada

POW Camp 99, Allah Abad, India

Soon after the escape tunnel was discovered, the general freedom in the camp was curtailed to a minimum and strict discipline enforced. One of the new rules restricted a POW visiting the toilets after 9:00 pm. One evening, I was sitting on my cot after dinner. I suddenly noticed that it was five minutes past the appointed hour and I had yet to complete my toilet formalities. I ran like a hare, stopped short of the toilets next to the Sikh Sentry and asked him to grant me his permission to visit the toilet after 9:00 pm. The Sirdar Ji halted me in my tracks and told me to wait there till his guard commander arrived

and decided the matter one way or the other. While I was waiting, two of my colleagues came out of the barracks armed with their lotas, walked right past the Sikh Sentry and into the toilets. Then they walked right back. I looked on in amazement, and then asked the Sentry as to why he had not stopped them.

"Why should I stop them? They never asked me."
Replied Sirdar Ji.

ROAD TO PAKISTAN

Air Commodore M Akbar Shahzada

POW Camp 99, Allah Abad, India

Amongst other Pakistani prisoners of war there was a sweeper. One day he went missing. Despite all efforts, he could not be located. After a week or so, he suddenly came back – his right arm in a sling and face full of cuts and bruises, a big bandage around his head. We all gathered around him and asked him where he had gone. He stated that one day while sweeping the camp, he had walked out of the camp gate unintentionally. Once outside, he decided to walk around Allah Abad. A sympathetic shopkeeper took him to his home. He fed him and looked after him – later he gave him a fair amount of money and told him to go home to Pakistan.

"Then why did you come back and where did you pick up all these injuries" We asked.
"I went to the Indian traffic constable at the big crossing and asked him which road led to Pakistan".

THE NATIVE

Air Marshal Khursheed Anwar Mirza

I was travelling from London to Ressington by train resplendent in my Flight Lieutenant's uniform, word Pakistan, sewn on my shoulders, the flying wings proudly displayed above the left pocket. There was an old English lady sitting on the seat right across me. She looked at me, taking my measure and then spoke.

"Young man – Are you here in England to learn flying?"
"Oh no ma'am, I am here to train other pilots how to become instructors", I replied.
"I know you are a Pakistani - I also know that you can't understand English very well", spoke the old lady. It was 1959 and the lady perhaps still lived in the old colonial era. "I'll repeat my question. Are you here to learn flying from the RAF pilots".
"No ma'am" I replied again. I am an instructor at the Central Flying School and I teach British pilots how to become flying instructors".
"What poor English", said the old lady," it is impossible to keep a decent conversation going with the natives anywhere".

She got up and proceeded to sit towards the far end of the compartment.

INDIAN PARATROOPERS

Squadron Ldr Shoaib Alam Khan

Sep' 65, Indo Pakistan War

There were rumours that PAF having dropped paratroops in India had invited a counter attack by Indian paratroopers. One moonlit night it was reported that Indian paratroopers had landed north of Sargodha

airfield. Contingents of police and other guards proceeded to the said area, surrounded it and started searching. There the police found a man who was ploughing his fields. They went and caught this man. The minute he was caught, he turned and said "Sahib, I made a mistake. I'll not do it again", When they took him in, he said over and over. "I made a mistake, I made a mistake".

Finally, somebody asked him, "What mistake has been committed by you?"

He replied, "You, see, I stole these bullocks from my neighbour. To avoid getting caught by the police, I decided to plough my fields at night.

"I didn't know that at night he'll send a whole army after me."

TOO MUCH FLYING

Squadron Leader Shoaib Alam Khan

During 25 years celebrations of the September War, when all the previous Air Chiefs and a large number of retired officers were being hosted by Air Chief Marshal Hakimullah, late Dildar Pervez Bhatti was one of the artists invited to entertain the guests. He had travelled from Lahore to Chaklala on a C-130 and his ears had started aching and ringing. He came on the stage and narrated his feelings in the following manner:

"When you fly for a long time, you lose your hearing. When you fly for a very long time, you stop seeing anything. When you fly for a very very long time, you stop thinking about anything." Then he looked at the first two Pakistani Commanders-in¬ Chief and said, "And when that happens you become a politician".

Both Asghar Khan and Nur Khan were into national politics. No other Air Chief has so ventured.

AUDIT OBJECTION

Anonymous

The two audit team members were on their maiden annual visit to a Flying Base. Considering their interest in the flying activity, they were escorted to the control tower. They thoroughly enjoyed listening to the pilot calls, and would spend a part of each day watching the aircraft take off and land.

They noted that the aircraft were always asked by the control tower to taxi out for R/W 35; they were told to line up and take off R/W 35 – and they were asked to land on R/W 35. Throughout their two-week long stay, only once the aircraft were asked to land on R/W 17, and that also in the afternoon. They were intrigued and quietly inquired from the aircraft technicians, control tower assistants and aircrew transport drivers as to which runway was used more often. The answer was the same; R/W 35 was always in use. They checked upon the incoming civil flights, local and foreign; all landed on and took off from R/W 35. Number of sorties flown by aircraft at the Base was calculated – aircraft from other bases were brought into reckoning and finally the audit team wrote their objection No 1:

PAF Base Peshawar has been equipped with two runways; 35 and 17. It has been observed that only one runway is being used for take off and landing for all types of aircraft. It is obvious that only one R/W is needed at Peshawar. The other runway (17) is surplus, not required and is a waste of Public Money. **It is recommended, therefore, that runway 17 may be shifted to a busier airport requiring a second runway.**

CONFUSING COMMAND

Air Commodore Hashim P Yameen

During the 1971 War, the final term cadets from PAF Academy, Risalpur were moved to various Bases for performing duties in the operations rooms etc. I was deployed at PAF Base Peshawar to assist in the administrative duties in the Air Defence Alert hut for the pilots.

One day, there was an Indian raid against the base. The ack ack came into action and started firing. However, it continued to fire even after the raiding aircraft had exited and had been out of the gun-defended zone for a minute or so. One of the pilots, the late Flight Lieutenant Fazal asked me to go out and tell the ack ack people to stop firing. I rushed out of the bunker and made off to the ack ack post shouting STOP FIRE; STOP FIRE. The local ack ack commander, a JCO, looked at me repeatedly but continued to fire. I shouted again and yet again STOP FIRE – STOP FIRE, but to no avail. They took their own time to go out of action.

Later on, the JCO was hauled up in front of the battery commander. On questioning, he replied that he didn't know what to do since he had never come across such a confused personality as this cadet who was issuing highly contradictory orders – all in one breath.

"First he would shout STOP; then he would shout, FIRE. And he went on and on like this. STOP --- FIRE ----- STOP ---- FIRE ---- What the heck was I supposed to do? Stop or Fire?

LUCKY LEADER

Air Commodore Sajjad Haider

War time flying is a very tiring activity. The body clock goes into a spin and one tries to fetch the beauty sleep whenever and wherever possible. So on the morning of 18 September 1965, when we had been

into war conditions for nearly three weeks, I decided to catch a few winks by popping a sleeping tablet into my system. Only about an hour and half later, I heard a distant voice speaking into my ear, "Get up....get up. He's here. Hurry up".

"Who's here, and what's the hurry?", I asked still deep in sleep.
"Get up, Get up. Rahim is here and he wants you. Quick, it's time for you to go. Get ready".

For a while it occurred to me that my time had come to go "upstairs" and Rahim i.e God himself had come to collect me. I do believe in meeting God but not before it is absolutely necessary. My response was, therefore, elusive.

"Why doesn't he take somebody else? Why not you? Why it has to be me ¬and anyway I'm too busy sleeping to go up".

"He can't take me because I'm the Base Commander around here. And he wants you because you are the squadron commander of this squadron. Now you better hurry before he comes and gets you himself. You know the great Lord Rahim is not a very patient man."

Now I was awake and understood that Air Commodore Rahim Khan, the Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Operations), my most favourite senior officer was in the Squadron and wanting for me. So, I jumped quickly putting on my cover-all and anti-G suit, ran off to my office. The operations chief, an imposing figure of a man, stood up on seeing me and simply said, "So you're ready. Let's go."

"What's the mission sir," I asked.
"We'll just fly around Srinagar area. No need for a map.
I know the place so do you."

"Sir let's get you a revolver and the survival kit in case you get shot down".

"Nobody is going to shoot me down".

You just couldn't argue with the man so I simply moved onto the parked aircraft. Soon we were airborne and jetting our F-86's towards Srinagar, low level; ACAS (Ops) in the lead, Sajjad Haider his wing man. Short of Srinagar we followed a main road and soon spotted a military convoy heading towards the combat zone. We rocketed and strafed the convoy, blew up a few trucks and then headed back into Pakistan. As we were nearing Risalpur, I asked the ACAS (Ops) to fall back as No 2 for some tail chase practice. I led as the target breaking hard to the right and to the left. Rahim Khan, not being in practice, had difficulty keeping up with me and after a few minutes, thinking that he had had enough, I came into land at Peshawar runway. After parking my aircraft, I walked across to his F-86 where he was just getting out of the cockpit. He walked onto the wing, looked down at me and said,

"Sajjad you're hellua of lucky guy".

"Why Sir," I enquired.

"I almost shot you today - many times - but you were moving too damn quickly. Every time, I pressed the trigger you broke off hard to one side or the other".

"But Sir, it is a normal procedure to press the trigger for filming the shot".

"Yes Sajjad that's normal procedure to press the trigger - but it is not normal to press the trigger when the gun circuit breaker is 'IN'."

BRAND NEW

Group Captain Rashid Janjua

Masroor, 1968, it is raining heavily, an airman, fresh from technical school, is fighting his way at the tarmac on his bicycle. OC 31 Wing stops his jeep in front of him and furiously asks:-

OC: *Why didn't you salute me?*
Airman: *(No answer)*
OC: *Are you new here?*
Airman: *(With a grin)– "Brand new Sir."*
OC: *Go to hell.*
Airman: *In this heavy rain sir?*

THE REAL IMPERSONATOR

Air Commodore Shaukat Haider Changezi

We were flying F-86s in Mauripur and young as we were – it was common to tease each other in various ways. It was usual for me to call one of my friends Flying Officer Naseem Tariq over the telephone and impersonate OC Flying Wing, Group Captain Zaigham. In turn, he would also impersonate the Base Commander. We would call each other by funny names and have a good laugh in the end.

One day I was performing duty in the mobile control when I received the usual call.

"I am Group Captain Zaigham, the OC Flying."
"Yes Mr OC Flying, I am the Base Commander."
"Who are you speaking? Base Commander is sitting right next to me".
"Yes, yes I know that. Now you'll say that Chief of the Air Staff is also sitting with you having tea."

"Actually, he is. Now who the hell are you?"
"I told you I'm the Base Commander. Now get off my bloody back and enjoy your tea with your damn Chief of the Air Staff. I've two F-86s landing and I'm rather busy". I banged the phone.

In approximately two and a half minutes, I saw a mushroom of dust rising off the runway and a jeep coming out of it seemingly trying to break the sound barrier. Squadron Leader Khurshid – the Jockey screeched to a halt outside and ran into the mobile, shouting:
"Changezi, you fool what have you done?"

"Sir."
"How dare you tell OC Flying that you are the Base Commander, and how come you talk about the CAS like that."
I almost felt dead,
"Sir, wasn't that Naseem Tariq, impersonating Group Captain Zaigham."
"No, that was the real impersonator – and he wants to eat you for lunch."
"Sir tell me – please – in which direction to run. I only thought it was Naseem Tariq."

He thought for a while and then said, "Okay take that jeep and run towards Sonmiani range. You are the Range Safety Officer for the next four days".

Normally, it was a punishment to go and live alone in that desert, but that day I went laughing, singing and enjoying my murli.

I don't know whom OC Flying had for lunch – but – wow – thanks to quick thinking by Squadron Leader Khurshid –

I wasn't the lunch.

OFFICERS AND MEN

Air Commodore Mir Alam

In March, 1971, we were detailed to move 150 men and one RR Jeep from Dacca to another location. I told the aircraft loadmaster to ensure that only 150 men board the aircraft and to coordinate with the Subedar in charge of the Army unit who had been briefed accordingly. After thirty minutes when I came to the aircraft, the loadmaster reported that the Subedar had boarded 165 men as per the manifest. I lost my temper on the Subedar and asked him to explain the reason for taking fifteen extra men. The Subedar came smartly to attention and said"

"Sahib men to 150 hi hain. Baqi 15 to Afsar hain".

TEMPORARY OR SUBSTANTIVE

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

When I got married, I was flying C-130s as a co-pilot. As usual, married accommodation was scarce and I was, with the tacit and secret approval of Wing Commander Inam, the Deputy PMC of Base Officers' Mess Chaklala, living in a VOQ (visiting officers' quarters). Since the VOQs at Chaklala are located at less than a minute's drive from the Base, I was quite content to stay even in a one-bedroom apartment.

One morning when I reached the squadron in the aircrew bus, I was surprised to find Wing Commander Zakir, the Flight Commander waiting, as if to provide protocol to me on arrival. He did not let me get off the bus and asked me if I was fit to fly. On getting a reply in the affirmative, he asked me how quickly I could change into flying coverall and come back. "Three minutes",

I replied. He told me that the co-pilot of a C-130 departing for Quetta and Karachi had suddenly fallen sick, the passengers and the crew were inside the aircraft and I should please hurry.

I asked him if I could take my wife along with me to Karachi. He nodded his assent and said that the seat next to the aircrew door would be made available for her.

I rushed to my room and told my wife that I was proceeding to Karachi and if she wished to come along, she had precisely one minute to collect a change of clothing and get into the bus. For the only time in our married life, she executed this unbelievable feat and was in the bus in less than a minute.

When we reached the aircraft, the captain had already started two engines and the propeller of the third was beginning to turn. I climbed through the aircrew door with my wife following close behind. The seat nearest to the door was vacant. I pointed her towards the seat, climbed up the steps into the cockpit and got into the co-pilot's seat. By now the fourth engine was turning. In less than a minute of our arrival on the C-130, we were taxiing out.

When we landed at Samungli air base for a one-hour stop, I got out and proceeded to take my wife to the air movement for a cup of tea. She just stood there looking pale and very worried.

"First tell me", she said "Are you temporary or substantive?"
"Substantive."
"Thank God."
"Why? What happened?"

"You see when I got into the aircraft, there was this very senior officer's wife sitting next to me. As I sat down, she was very respectful. She asked me if I was the Chief's daughter. I said no, I was simply a Squadron Leader's wife. At once her tone changed, she got very angry and said, "Young lady, next time you make me wait like this, I'll have your husband reduced from substantive to temporary. And if he is already temporary then help you God".

"I wanted to know if you are a substantive or a temporary husband."

AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

Pakistan Air Force has enjoyed excellent relations with many other Air Forces and that includes the Turkish Air Force. The PAF and the TuAF have routinely sent their instructors on exchange posting and the No 2 Squadron at Masroor always had one odd Turkish instructor. Sometimes in early 70s, a sister-in-law of a Turkish captain came visiting from Turkey. A young Pilot Officer (later Gp Capt Abdul Ghaffar Khan) was very impressed with her credentials and decided to cement further the existing friendly relations between the two Air Forces by asking for her hand in marriage. She informed the officer to follow the proper channel of approach and that this would entail a visit to her parents in Ankara. The Pilot Officer made some quick calculations and found that his pay inclusive of all the allowances would not get him even to Tehran – flying to Ankara, staying there for a few days and then flying back was absolutely impossible. How about an engagement ring – if her parents agreed – and what if two tickets were needed on his return journey, hopefully. His young mind revved and raved. Normal problems could be resolved normally, but extra ordinary problems required extra ordinary solutions. After a week's meditations, the solution came to him – quite suddenly. It was fairly simple in conception; never mind the slight hitch in execution. It was a matter between two officers, really.

He picked up the phone and dialled.

The Commander-in-Chief's PA tried hard to convince him that normally the Pilot Officers did not bestow the honour of "verbal communication" on their C-in-C. May be he should try his Officer Commanding or the Base Commander if the matter was of great importance, or perhaps the Air Secretary. The "Pilot Officer" wouldn't take that for an answer. The PA was told that it was a state matter

involving relations between two countries and that C-in-C better talk to him personally. Incredibly, the C-in-C came on line.

"Yes", the voice cut through the Pilot Officer as would a knife through butter, but it was an international affair so he hung on.

"Sir, I'm pilot officer X"

"Yes."

"Sir, I wish to speak to you on a matter of extreme importance"

"Yes."

"Sir, you see this Turkish lady – Pakistan – Turkey."

"Yes."

Sir nobody can help me except you. My pay can't get me even across to Ankara, Sir, Sir."

"Is the Air Force now going to turn into a damn marriage bureau?"

"No Sir, Yes Sir, ---- No Sir ---- Sorry Sir ---- Turkey Sir --- No Sir --- Pleaeaease – Sir."

The phone had been long dead in his hand before the Pilot Officer could breathe relatively normally.

His ears were red and colour a distinct pale yellow. He looked around. Nobody had overheard his conversation. Quietly, he sneaked back into the mess and tried to eat. Nothing …. Sleep would not come to him. The consequences of his bold step seemed drastic. He felt eyes watching him. Any moment he expected the Air Force police to pick him up and put him in a cell. Nothing happened for two days. No food, no sleep, no police. Then he was called to appear before the Base Commander. His salute and attention position were flawless.

"You called the Commander-in-Chief."

"Yes Sir. No Sir. Yes Sir. I am sorry Sir."

"Why?"

"Sir Pakistan and Turkey. No sir. Turkey and Pakistan."

"You have Passport."

"I don't drink port Sir."

"Pa..a…ss..port"

"No Sir."

"Commander-in-Chief has attached you with the Air Attaché's Office in Ankara for one month. Get your passport and sort out your international affair."

"Oh, oh. Who'll go with me Sir."

"You will go alone."

He came back alone too.

SIJN

Air Marshal Saleem Arshad

In Libya one of the customs of service is to punish anyone going "OFFLINE" by sending him to Sijn (Jail) for even a trivial offence. It is easy to note if someone has been to jail – his head would be shaved. This rule is applied without any distinction – from an ordinary soldier to the top brass. While I was in Libya, their Air Force Chief Colonel Farjani was sent to jail many a time and the incumbent head shave. Next day, he would come to the squadron and continue as if nothing had happened. Sometimes, he incurred the Defence Minister's wrath and sometimes Colonel Qaddafi was upset about something and dispatched Farjani to 'Sijn'. Farjani was Chief for good about 11-12 years and must have had gone to jail for more than 25 times.

THE ONE WHO ALMOST GOT AWAY

Air Commodore Sajjad Haider

The Air Force was involved in action against the Indian forces since 1st September, 1965. All the missions being flown were by Sargodha Squadrons. Frustration at our end was high. Therefore, when the Commander-in-Chief Air Marshal Nur Khan asked me on 5th September "if my squadron was getting ready for the coming war", I replied that we were in fact becoming 'unready' for action. At this the C-in-C ordered Air Commodore F S Hussain to immediately allocate a good mission to the 19 Squadron. Consequently the next morning, six Sabers took off at 09:00 to provide close support to an army unit in FLORA, Azad Kashmir. As the formation descended down through 5000 feet close to the target area, Air Commodore Masroor Hussain the Sector Commander at Sakesar shouted on the Radio,

> *"Sajjad, Sajjad your mission is changed. The Indian armour has crossed Wagah border and is approaching the outskirts of Lahore. The Pak Army is not yet in position to accord proper protocol to them. Immediately, proceed to Batapur and do the needful".*

At once I ordered my formation to start turning right and called Masroor Hussain,

> *"Sir, where is Batapur, exactly?"*
> *"How should I know where it is, exactly, It is somewhere on the road from Wagah to Lahore; Indian armour will be kicking up a lot of dust; that's for sure. Good luck and good hunting".*

After reaching Lahore, the Sabres followed the road to the Wagah border. After many sweeps, I found what I thought was, finally, the Pak Army. Greatly relieved I turned my Sabre on its back to offer a

salute to own troops. As I moved over the first tank, I saw a big Saffron roundel indicating that it was not Pakistani but an Indian tank. This prompted many inappropriate words to be ejected from my mouth in the honour of the visitors. Then I shouted Allah-o-Akbar and rolling into the attack, struck the first tank that was in a 30 degrees nose up position trying to climb the canal bank. Rest of the formation followed suit and wreaked havoc on the Indians. Tank after tank and vehicle after vehicle went up in the air. In the ensuing confusion the Indian soldiers ran in all directions to save their lives. Then I saw a flag jeep with one red star and went after it. Before I could begin my strafing run, I saw the Brigade Commander jump out of the jeep and run. Out of my gun sight now, he slipped and fell down the canal bank.

Here was one casualty not directly attributable to air action by No 19 Squadron

TAKE A LEAK .... WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL

Air Vice Marshal Shaukat

Two UAE youngsters Zahrani and Qasim, training in England were scheduled to fly solo navigation and proceeded to fly the first leg - second helicopter two minutes behind the first. After ten minutes of flight Zahrani, pilot of the lead helicopter realized that he had had a cup of tea one too many in the morning and would not be able to concentrate on his navigation unless he relieved himself. Looking around for a safe place to land, he spied a hillock, the top of which though fairly well rounded seemed to offer him the only landing spot around. He made a short approach and, put his Gazelle down on this crest. Since this would be only a short foray, he kept the chopper's rotors turning, opened the left door and climbed down the hill towards the bushes 60 meters below to ensure his privacy. As he began to

relieve himself, the wind picked up speed and then there was a sudden gust from the left which pushed the little bird towards it right and took it downhill rolling over and over again. This was precisely the time when Qasim, flying the second Gazelle was approaching short of the hill and his eagle eyes observed his friend's helicopter roll down the hillside. Reacting to an emergency situation, he quickly located "the spot" on top of the hill, decided that it was fit for landing and put his Gazelle down. Leaving his rotors churning, he jumped out of the door and raced down the hill towards his friend's prostrate helicopter. He reached the helicopter within a minute and began to search for his friend.

Meanwhile, Zahrani, having relieved himself to his satisfaction, walked out of the bushes, climbed up the hill, jumped into the waiting helicopter and strapped himself leisurely. And since he had very wisely left the rotors turning, he simply rotated the cyclic and took off humming a "Fairooz" song. "Ana Tair Tair Tair"

"I'm a bird, I'm flying, and I'm flying".

He completed his navigation and landed at the base after another hour. He was cheerful on completion of his solo 'navigation' successfully and happy to find his Squadron Commander waiting for him on the tarmac. Then he saw the strange looks on his face and on the faces of the ground crew.

Sometimes they looked at him and sometimes at the helicopter. Finally, the Squadron Commander approached him and said:

"If you are Zahrani then where is your helicopter, and if this is the helicopter that you took, then why are you not Qasim."

Zahrani could not understand the question - and when the question was explained to him - could not furnish the answer. Nobody could understand how he could have taken off in helicopter No 842, but landed back in 846. Zahrani blamed everything on the **'Bloody British'** but the **"Bloody British"** did not know whom to blame.

Elsewhere despite all his efforts, Qasim could not find his friend. Tired, he climbed all the way back to the hill top and to his horror could find his helicopter nowhere.

Dazed and confused, he sat down on the hillock and dozed - and dozed and waited.

He had to wait for a very long time. It was near sunset when Zahrani and his 'confused' Squadron Commander retraced his flight path in another helicopter and located his lost helicopter and confused and lost friend, humming a Fairooz melody,

"Habbaitak bis-saif wa Habbaitak bish shittey"
(O my friend, I waited for you in the summer and
I waited for you in the winter).

SHAADI KHANA ABADI

Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat

Squadron Commander, Wing Commander Sattar Alvi was not the one to tolerate inefficiency, lack of knowledge or even a poor call – and if you ended up being consistent in any of the above categories, then help you God. Unfortunately, Flying Officer Rahim Bakhsh fell into that category. So one day when a four shipper led by the Squadron Commander was pulling out of Thal range, Sattar Alvi called out.

"Rahim where are you?"
"Leader 4 O' clock to you?"
"Damn half the world is 4 O' clock to me."

During landing Rahim Bakhsh made another "error" and was immediately stopped from proceeding on any kind of leave for one month. Rahim Bakhsh, after four hours was to proceed to Chakwal for

his marriage ceremony scheduled for the next day. Knowing Alvi well, a lascar was immediately sent to Rahim's village with the message:

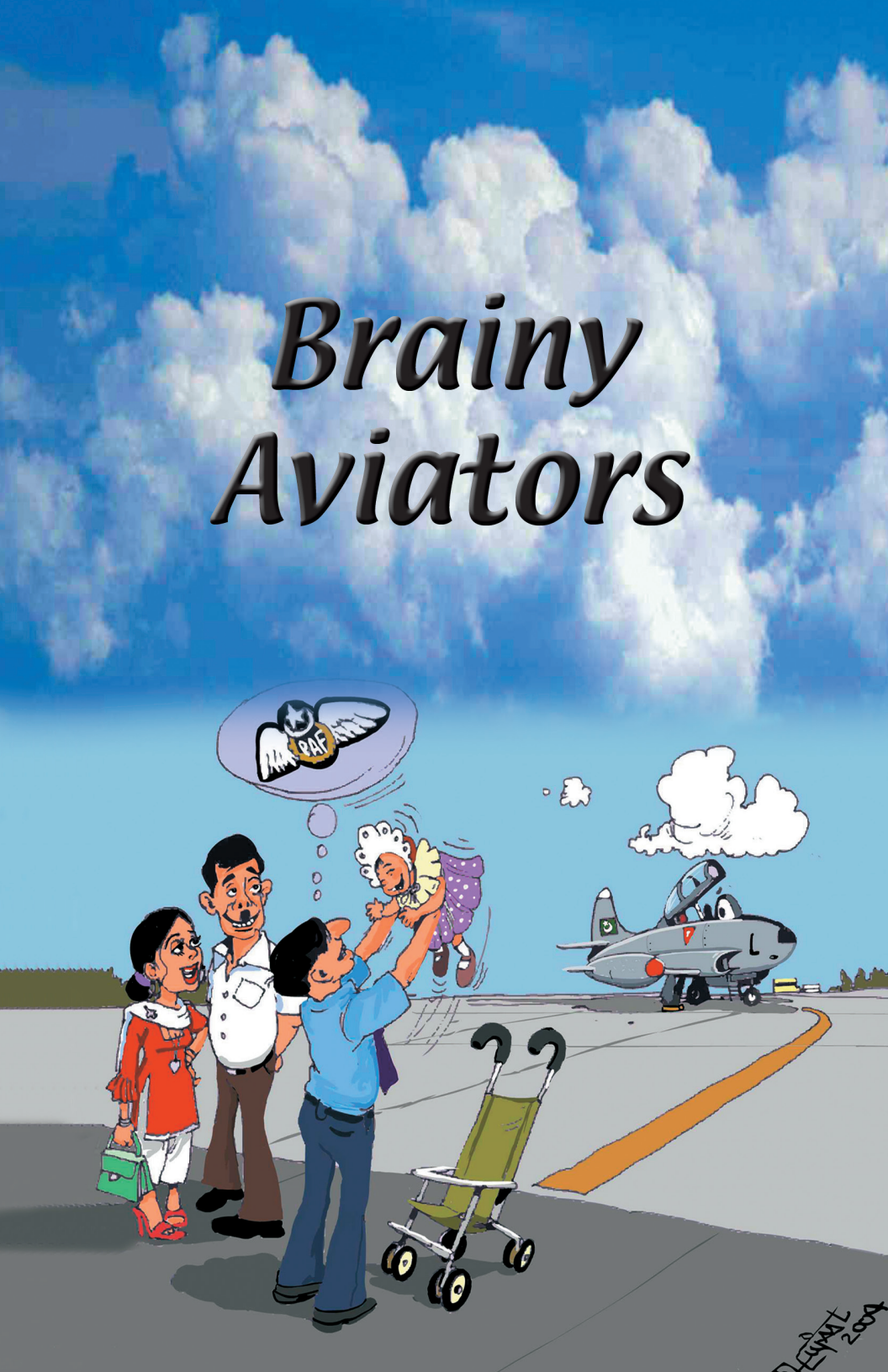
"Yeh Shaadi naheen Ho Sakti".

Later Rahim came to me and narrated his predicament. I spoke to the Squadron Commander and Rahim was allowed to proceed to Chakwal. This was a no mobile phone era and the lascar had a head start of two hours over Raheem and on reaching Chakwal had delivered the message. There was absolute pandemonium. The guests in their glittering dresses suddenly had nowhere to go. With pulled down faces the elders got together and managed to convince the women and youngsters that in the larger interest of the Pakistan Air Force and for "operational reasons that could not be stated" the marriage had to be postponed. Reluctantly the relatives started packing their bags and getting into the buses and carts.

Then Rahim arrived, with the new slogan:

"Yeh Shadi Zaroor Ho Gee."

Brainy Aviators



SAY THAT AGAIN

Air Marshal Asghar Khan

In 1944, in the war against the Japanese, No 9 Squadron was based in the Arakans, Burma, as part of a fighter group under Air Vice Marshal, the Earl of Bandon. In those days, there was hardly any protocol and Air Marshals were not always driven around by drivers. At one of the squadron parties, when the Earl of Bandon wanted to leave after dinner, he found his jeep missing. He had left the key in the vehicle and someone had driven the jeep away. Whilst he was looking around for it, a Flight Lieutenant drove back in the vehicle. Someone present told this officer that he had taken the Air Marshal's jeep and that he had been waiting for it for a long time. "Let the Rascal wait," he said. The place was not well lit and in the darkness he had not noticed the Air vice Marshal. **"Say that again," the Earl said, "I have not heard this word for a long time now," and with a laugh drove away.**

A DETERMINED PILOT

Air Commodore Javaid Sabir

A junior under training pilot doing F-86 conversion, was scared of flying with his Squadron Commander for fear of being suspended from flying. One day, to his bad luck, Squadron Commander handpicked him for flying. The under training pilot had no mood to be crucified. He was determined not to fly with the Squadron Commander. He tried forwarding one excuse after another; and even tried to find discrepancy in F-781 aircraft pre-flight inspection, but failed. As they sat in two separate aircraft, parked at some distance from each other on the tarmac, the under training pilot decided to play "deaf". After strapping in, as they got ready to start up, the usual "radio check" was carried out. The leader called up the under training pilot several times, but he did not respond. The leader sent the crew chief to get visual

attention of the under training pilot. On gaining his attention, he again transmitted' "No 2, can you hear me"? The No 2 instantly moved his big head in a sideways negative motion!

The leader aborted the mission.

AN OVERSTRESSED IP

Flight Lieutenant Shahid

It was one of the fine days of September, 2001 when my honourable colleague instructor pilot Squadron Leader Sagheer Aman briefed for a mission with the student pilot for CD-32 in which he had to teach him one new Pre-MTT manoeuvre along with the practice of old ones. He went walking to the aircraft after positively identifying his designated aircraft tail No. Meanwhile, he was busy thinking about some other matters.

While approaching the aircraft, he drifted towards another aircraft parked beside it with one student pilot waiting for his IP. He sat inside, strapped up and told the student pilot to proceed. After coming back from the mission, he exclaimed that:

> *"Yar, this student was very sharp and an excellent learner. Whatever I wanted to teach him he was already performing that, before even seeing a demo".*

The Flight Commander, who was already waiting for him hearing this, picked up an ¬MTT (Mid Term Test) grade slip and handed over to Squadron Leader Sagheer saying this"

"My brother, please fill this assessment form.
He was due for his MTT with me."

STRIKING GOLD

Air Marshal Qaiser Hussain

I was to have very tough instructors through all my training phases. In No 2 Squadron, flying T-33s, I had an instructor who was reputed to have suspended anyone who dared to occupy the front cockpit with him. My course mates were always teasing me as to when my D-Day was arriving. Each morning, I woke up expecting it to be the last day of my flying career until one evening, when I struck gold.

I was standing outside the Officers' Mess reception at Masroor Base when I saw my instructor approaching along with his wife and a small little baby in a stroller. I walked up to them, wished them and started talking to them. During the course of conversation, I realized that my instructor was very fond of his first born baby girl. Immediately, I started to praise the baby – term her brown eyes blue, her brown hair golden – her whitish colour as fairy fair. I picked up the

baby and played with her for a while, then put her in the stroller and drove her around – then picked her up again – put her in the stroller – then picked her up again.

I began to regularly pick up his baby,
he began to pick up my grades.

OF PILOT OFFICERS

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

Once upon a time, the "pilots" used to be commissioned not in the rank of "Flying Officers" but in that enchanting rank of Pilot Officer. This rank had great merits. It indicated that the holder was a "pilot" as well as an "officer". And even though the poor Pilot Officers' ranks were hardly visible, these bore an "aura' of immortality and invincibility.

On his part the "PILOT OFFICER" believed that in status and importance he was next only to the Air Force Chief even though it was said that a Pilot Officer's name was written at the Air HQ in pencil with an eraser on its end.

Pilot Officer Aurangzeb Khan graduated from Risalpur and proceeded to the biggest town of Pakistan, Karachi, on his first posting. When he reached Masroor Base, though it was the tenth day of his commissioning, it would be his first day of living in an Officers' Mess. Since he joined the Air Force two and half years ago, for the first time that day there would be no compulsory games in the evening. He enjoyed a good afternoon nap to celebrate the day sleep. Later, he rose, bathed, dressed into his best clothes and stepped onto the road to having his first evening in the officers' mess. The road was a good twelve foot wide and the tall and handsome Pilot Officer Auragnzeb commandeered the very centre of it. The moon shone brightly on his face and the sea breeze playfully tugged on his clothes. He felt on

top of the world and stayed there, not noticing the small things of the world including the car behind, that was trying to find a way past him. The car tried its lights on beam, honked its horn, and revved the engine; the actions carried out individually and collectively. No joy. Pilot Officer Auragnzeb Khan took his sweet time to walk the fifty yards before the road widened enough for the car to move abreast of him. Then the car stopped, the window was rolled down and a male voice came loud and clear: Lagta hay, naiy naiy pilot officer hooay ho".

Pilot Officer Aurangzeb became an Air Marshal and retired from service after serving as Chairman PAC Board and DCAS (Training).

TAMING THE SHREW

Air Vice Marshal Ikram Bhatti

In Mianwali the culture does not permit the locals to work as servants, hence it was with great difficulty that some poor fellows were roped in to work as batmen to the officers at the new Base. They were all quite rude and uncouth. Usually, they would address officers as "tuu" instead of "aap". Pilot Officer Rahat was made Project Officer "impart manners" to the crude fellows. He taught them not to address the officers as "tuu" but as "aap".

After a few days one of the more transformed batmen, approached Rahat and proceeded to talk to him in the following manner:

"Sir, AAP KA BAP LOHE KA KAAM KARTA HAY.
AAP KAY BAP KO CHOT LAG GAI HAY.
AAP KO DO DIN CHUTTI CHAAHIYE."

RECEIVER FAILURE

Flight Lieutenant Naeem

No 2 of a two-shipper A-5 formation experienced a receiver failure while the transmitter was still serviceable. Leader decided to abort the mission. He called No 2 in close formation and they began to burn fuel for landing. After a while the leader asked the No 2 through visual signal about his 'Fuel remaining?" No 2 instead of using his transmitter, tried to signal back. Leader signalled his No 2 repeatedly to transmit but No 2 could not understand. Then quite suddenly, the leader began to roll his aircraft towards No 2. When he was almost vertical, No 2 suddenly shouted on R/T, "Lead what are you doing?" The leader rolled level and asked for "Fuel remaining".

This time the reply came in loud and clear, "1500 litres."

IF I EVER GET MY HANDS ON THAT CORPORAL

Air Vice Marshal Iftikhar A Gul

It was a cold December evening in Peshawar. It was a weekend, and a grand dinner and a fancy dress party had been planned in the Officers' Mess. We all had prepared our fancy costumes well in advance and were looking ahead to an enjoyable evening. But as usual, there were last minute orders, instructions and guidelines pouring in from Wing Commander Abbas Khattak, the Squadron Commander with priority of executing those "Yesterday". Finally, we managed to detach ourselves from airplanes and lumbered across to the mess by 7:00 pm, nearly half dead, kept alive only by the thoughts of a pleasant evening.

The party was at 7:30 pm and there was hardly any time to waste. While we were getting ready for the party and at the same time discussing our ill luck of being in 15 Squadron, somebody got the

bright idea of changing this ill luck into good luck by really enjoying the party all by ourselves. The plan was discussed and agreed to unanimously. At about 7:25 pm we found out the whereabouts of our "enemy", the Squadron Commander, from his batman, Baaqar. He confirmed that he was all dressed up in his fancy robes wearing his famous perfume. When he reported that he was running the comb through his hair and humming his favourite English tune, we knew he was almost ready for take off. We decided to strike.

The phone rang in Wg Cdr Abbas Khattak's room with an insistent tone.

- Hullo – yes?
- Sir – sallam alaikum – main Capal Imdad boal raha hoon – 15 Squadron Flight lines se.
- Walaikum salam – yes Cpl Tech Imdad what can I do for you?
- Sir aap Khattak sahib boal rahain hain?
- Yes, what is it? (looks at his watch) jaldee bolo.
- Sir – aik occurrence ho gayee hai
- What—tt ---- occurrence – kaisay – kia hua hai----?
- Sir aik Hobart wallay ney aik F-6 ko takkar mar dee hai – Sir –
- KIAAA --- takkar mar dee hai OH MY GOD:! jahaz theek hai.
- Jee Sir jehaaz to theek hay laiken jehaaz ka wing damage ho gaya hai --
- Oh --- Oh God --- kitna damage hai ---
- Sir wing to thorra dmage hai --- laikin doosray jehaaz ki pitto toot gia hai!!
- Kiaaa – doosra jahaz – Oh my God --- woh kaisay damage howa hai ---
- Sir – driver nai reverse kia aur doosray jehaaz ko reverse main takkar mar dee ---
- Ohh --- my God --- do Jahaz ko damage kar dia – ab kia ho gaa?
- Sir, laiken good news bee hai…
- Kia?
- Hobart theek thaak hai aur us ka driver bhee---
- Oh you xxx ka bachaa --- tum nai Gul sahib (Engineering Officer and the author of this article) ko batayaa –
- Nahee – Sir, woo nahee mil raha.

- OK tum uder thahro – mai atta hoon --- Oh my God – do jahaz – party --- do jahaz – Oh my God – ab kia ho gaaa.

At 7:30 pm Khattak sahib got out of his room and ran to his car. With our room lights off we spied him jumping into the driving seat and trying to start the car. Screeching and seething, he took off towards the Base, with every passing second moving away from us and moving away from the party. As he approached the Base Guard Room, we approached the grand party and the dinner. Abbas Khattak's headlong dash towards the Flight Line was brought to a sudden end by a gun-totting MODC guard who challenged him for password. The MODC had never crossed Abbas Khattak's path before, especially soon after a double occurrence. He found himself to be the recipient of some special English torrent and quickly caved in. Abbas Khattak drove relentlessly on and arrived at Flight Line in tremendous fury. He yelled and roared, searched the entire flight line and the Hobart Section – interviewed almost 10 SNCOs and airmen, yet could not locate any damaged aircraft. He could not locate the offending Hobart neither could he find the Corporal who had called him --- Corporal Imdad.

And that is when he realized that somebody had done it to him.

He came back to the party at about 9:30 pm when it was almost over and called me and told me about the incident. I acted totally ignorant and told him that I would go and investigate. He gave a big laugh and said, "Some XXX Cpl has pulled a smart one on me – If I ever get my hands on him---"

Post Script

Air Chief Marshal Khattak met me in a gathering of Biannual Flight Safety meeting when he was the CAS. He reminded me of that incident and said, "Gul, now that I am the Chief, if I ever get my hands on that Corporal, ---"

Sir, could you pardon him ---old times sake?

NO CANNONS

Wing Commander Rafique Chaudhary

One Sunday morning RPAF Commander-in-Chief Air Vice Marshal LW Cannon wanted to go partridge shooting and called Mauripur operator to connect him to the duty NCO in the station armoury. He wanted to retrieve his 12 Bore shot gun, which was in safe custody there. When the NCO came on line the C-in-C said,

"It's Cannon here".

"We do not have any cannons here, only 303 rifles",
retorted the NCO and dropped the telephone.

BEDAZZLED

Air Commodore Abdul Ghaffar

Pilot Officer Tariq Wahid was on duty in the Mobile Control for Runway 27 at Masroor air base, Karachi. His course mate Pilot Officer Shaukat Changezi had joined him to spend the hot afternoon in an air-conditioned environment. He was relaxing on the sofa. The Corporal on duty took an armchair next to the R/T control panel. Only one aircraft was airborne and it was due to land after one hour. There was no activity and Tariq Wahid was bored. To pass time, he picked up the Varey pistol (used to fire RED or GREEN cartridges to guide the aircraft if their radio communication fails). He turned it around in his hand and aimed it towards the right side of the all glass mobile control. He played with the trigger for a while, turned towards the Corporal and asked him if the Varey pistol was loaded.

"I think it is not loaded Saar", answered the Corporal.
Tariq Wahid pulled the trigger.

A red cartridge shot out of the muzzle of the pistol and raced towards the glass wall at the right side with a deafening noise. It hit

the wall, ricocheted off it and ran towards the front wall. Splinters of glass flew in all directions, and from all directions lights of various colours showed and died out. It seemed as if fireworks were being held at some carnival. Tariq Wahid sat dazed, staring at the pistol in his hand and the grey smoke coming out of its muzzle. There was smell of cordite everywhere.

Tariq Wahid turned towards his course mate. Pilot Officer Changezi was lying prostrate on the sofa, a cushion tightly held over his head. He turned left; couldn't see the Corporal. Finally, he spotted him – lying under the chair, index fingers of both the hands stuck hard in his ears. Tariq Wahid looked at him, his eyes accusing.

"I think it was loaded Saar," whispered the utterly shaken Corporal!

BRAINY GAME

Air Commodore M A Shahzada

POW Camp 99 Allah Abad 1972

Flight Lieutenant PQ Mehdi (later Chief of the Air Staff), Flight Lieutenant Akbar Shahzada, Wing Commander Ehsan and Captain Baig-* were sitting in the bright winter sunshine enjoying their game of bridge when Shahzada noticed that the local General Officer Commanding, a Sikh was approaching them. He immediately informed PQ Mehdi. By now the Major General was standing next to the foursome. Straight away PQ Mehdi invited the Sikh General to join them for a hand.

The General waived him on, "You boys continue. This is a Brainy Game. We Sikhs have nothing to do with it."

BUTT AND BUTT

Anon

Squadron Leader Butt was taking an evening walk with his young son when he ran into the new Base Commander, also enjoying his walk. Butt locked his arms on his sides to salute the Base Commander and introduced himself, "Sir I am Squadron Leader Butt, Officer in Charge Armament Squadron."

Base Commander shook the Armament Officer's hand, looked at the young lad and said,

"If you are Butt, then this, must be the small of the Butt."

'N' SOS

Flight Lieutenant Manzoor Chaudhary

Flight Lieutenant Zahid Butt was flying a Bristol Freighter from Lahore to Dacca. Enroute over India, he lost one of his two engines. Immediately, the captain began to wrestle with the aileron and rudder controls to keep the aircraft straight. He asked his co-pilot to give full power on the operating engine and call out the emergency actions. In between all this, he managed a quick "Rana 'n' SOS" to his air signaller and then continued to complete the emergency drill. After the aircraft had been stabilized in the single engine flight profile, he relaxed and looked back towards the Air Signaller. Rana just didn't seem to be coming back. Worried, he asked his co-pilot to go downstairs to the main cabin and locate him. Soon the co-pilot returned to the cockpit Rana in tow.

"Where had you run off"? enquired Zahid.

Rana looked back at his captain accusingly and said, "Didn't you say yourself to me:

"Rana NAS O NAS" – (Run, Rana, Run)

DISCHARGED BATTERIES

Squadron Leader Tahir (Psychologist)

Air Commodore Ashraf Chaudhary, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Training), was visiting Kohat in 1976. PAF officers posted to the Base and ISSB had gathered there to discuss the 'Testing Methodology' used during the selection procedure for officers. The Air Commodore asked the officers about psychological tests being administered for screening of the candidates. The 'Pysch' Officers explained that they used various test batteries for the purposes which were constantly in operation. The word 'test batteries' was used repeatedly during the conversation.

As was his norm, the Air Commodore listened to all this without saying one word. When everybody had finished, he turned towards the senior psychologist sitting next to him and spoke quietly,

"What do you do when their batteries get discharged?"

IDENTIFICATION PROBLEM

Air Commodore Shahzada

I was on deputation to Saudi Arabia in 1978 and working as adviser to OC Maintenance Wing of King Faisal Air Academy at Riyadh. An American Air Force team came to visit all Royal Saudi Air Bases. While the team was in town, the Defence Minister, His Royal Highness, Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz hosted a dinner in their honour. After the dinner was over, the Prince walked over to one of the American pilots, a Negro, smiled and said to him "John if you wear my 'Thob' and go out in Riyadh, nobody will think you are American".

Prompt came the reply

"Sir, "Back home I have the same problem".

KEEP THE COIN

Wg Cdr Dawood Ahmed

It was early 1970 and a big Squadron party was being held at PAF Station Dacca. Air Officer Commanding Air Commodore Mitty Masood was the Chief Guest and Wing Commander Nosey Haider, OC No 14 Squadron, the host. Towards the end of the party when everybody was a bit high, the AOC retrieved a one rupee coin from his pocket and gingerly tossed it over the top of shamiana under which he was standing. Then he asked the Squadron Commander to go and get the coin. Nosey Haider somehow managed to climb to the top, retrieved the AOC's coin and offered it to Mitty Masood with exaggerated ceremony.

"Keep the coin, Nosey", the AOC said, "And go, get yourself a hair cut".

ADVICE TO THE PAKISTANI WICKETKEEPER

Air Vice Marshal Arshad Rashid Sethi

We were in Mauripur for annual air-to-air gunnery practice. It was a great change from the desert atmosphere of Shorkot Base and the Squadron Officers decided to go for a dinner to the Inter Continental Hotel. As we approached the hotel entrance, we noticed Tasleem Arif the Pakistan Cricket Team wicketkeeper, who incidentally was not having a good time behind the wickets, just ahead of us. A courteous gentleman, Tasleem Arif went in and held the door for us. We all walked in, every one thanking him and trying to take over holding the door from him but he insisted on seeing everyone through. At the fag end came Flight Lieutenant Arif Majeed. As he walked in, he looked Tasleem Arif squarely in the eye and said, "It is nice of you to hold the door, but sometimes you should hold your catches as well".

GENTLEMEN

Wing Commander Hashmat Khawaja

Wing Commander Sardar Ali, a very simple man by nature, after serving his tenure as Staff Ops Officer Sargodha, was being dined out in the Mess. As per procedure the Base Commander proposed a toast for Wing Commander Sardar's health, raised his glass and said, "Gentlemen".

Everyone rose – So did Sardar Ali.

A young pilot seated next to him looked at Sardar Ali and said,

"Sir you sit down. He said Gentlemen".

PERMISSION TO BEAT IN THE PAF

'Wing Commander Rafique Chaudary

One day we were sitting in the No 9 Squadron crew room when Flight Lieutenant A Ahmad Khan walked in carrying his parachute on the shoulder, his face red with anger. He narrated how a crew chief had had the temerity to dispute his reasons for aborting his mission; the crew chief had repeatedly disagreed with the pilot's version of the events and had been trying to correct the pilot's handling of the emergency procedures.

To display his level of annoyance and disgust, Ayaz well known for his temper, threw his parachute on the ground and said, "I wish beating was allowed in the Air Force".

Flying Officer Shabbir Hussain Syed who was also sitting in the crew room, looked at Ayaz and said, **"Had beating been allowed in the Air Force, you would always be in CMH".**

Both the officers made Vice Chiefs of the Air Staff

SPIN AND RECOVERY

'Wing Commander Rafique Chaudhary

During the fifties and sixties, it was forbidden to fly within thirty miles of the Indo - Pak border-the regulation strictly enforced. One day, we were sitting in the crew room of No 16 Squadron at Peshawar when one of our pilots Flight Lieutenant K R Qureshi walked in with his parachute over the shoulder and helmet in the hand and proudly announced to all and sundry, "Today I saw Lahore".

The Squadron Commander, Squadron Leader Sadruddin who had been sitting unseen in a corner, his face buried in the newspaper, suddenly lowered the newspaper and yelled.

"In other words you were over Lahore. You flew within less than 30 miles from the border".

Qureshi went into an inverted spin on finding that the Squadron Commander had been sitting there and had heard of his historical visit to Lahore. But he effected a quick recovery "sir I saw it while turning".

"Of course when you see it while turning, you are over it", retorted the Squadron Commander.

"No Sir, I meant I saw it over the wing".

"Qureshi", replied Sadruddin, "You are very smart. In one second you have moved Lahore fifty miles away from you."

ALL CLEAR!

Air Commodore Azfar Khan

During 1971 War, we used to have a meteorological officer with the name of Squadron Ldr Masud Jamal. His peculiarity was that he used to be busy in every thing on earth except his own profession!

One day in the hot afternoon of monsoons, he was fast asleep in his tent. He received a call from the Ops Officer, "Masud, we want to send a recce sortie. How is the weather?" Masud, half-asleep, yawned,

lifted his side of the flap by a few inches, looked outside and said, "All clear!" The sortie was sent but was recalled after ten minutes as CB clouds were approaching from the direction opposite to the tent. The telephone rang and this time it was the Base Cdr who was on the line. After a lot of yelling the Base Cdr asked Masud how the hell he could act so irresponsibly and give clearance to the Ops Officer without looking at the sky. Masud very innocently replied, "Sir, I had seen outside only from one side of the tent, but unfortunately, the clouds appeared from the other direction."

LIBYAN TIME?

Air Vice Marshal Iqbal Haider

I was flying a Ground Controlled Interception (GCI) mission with a Libyan pilot Captain Muhammad Mahmood Bzezi. We took off from Tabruk, Libya in our Mirage aircraft and changed over to Sagar Control for the GCI; I was Blue Leader and Bzezi Blue two. I climbed to 20,000 feet and was flying as the target while Bzezi at 22,000 feet, was the interceptor. Sagar Control guided Bzezi on to me:

"Blue two, Target 10 o'clock, 10 miles."
"No contact."
"Blue two, Target 10 o'clock 7 miles"
No contact."
"Blue two, Target 10 o'clock 5 miles."
"No contact."
All of a sudden he saw me right in front of him dead at 12 O'clock.
He called:-

"Sagar control this is Blue two. Confirm you are giving the course local time or GMT (There being two hours difference between local time and GMT)".

NOTICE IN THE PAF OFFICERS MESS DACCA: APRIL 1971

Air Commodore Mir Alam

NOTICE I

"As all the cooks and waiters have run away, please get your meals yourself. Also do your Dishes yourselves."

NOTICE II

"Regardless of cooks and waiters running away, dress regulations are to be strictly followed. Ties are to be worn after sunset."

Mess Secretary

In the pantry somebody posted the following rejoinder:

"After washing the dishes, wipe them clean with your ties".

User

RESURRECTION

Air Commodore Mir Alam

During the emergency of 1971, we were evacuating families from Jessore in a C¬-130. As seats in the aircraft had been removed and everybody was seated on the floor, we managed to bring in 165 passengers instead of the usual 92. Obviously, the air conditioning system was unable to cope up and a small child fainted due to suffocation. The father of the child, a pathan, started shouting that his son had died. The experienced crew chief quickly ran around with an oxygen bottle and put the child on oxygen. Soon ¬the boy opened his eyes and started looking around. Seeing that the boy was feeling comfortable, the crew chief moved on to help somebody else. In about five minutes the poor boy collapsed again. His father called the crew chief at the top of his voice and said:

"My son has died again. Please bring him to life again as you did before."

SO MUCH FOR THE DRILL

Air Commodore Siraj

Normally, Chief of the Air Staff arrives for work accompanied by his ADC. As the driver parks the car in the porch, the Personal Staff Officer to the CAS comes to attention and salutes to receive him. Meanwhile, the ADC gets out of the car, quickly moves around the car and falls behind the CAS. In the process with his right hand, he hits the car door closed from which the boss has just exited. Then all three officers, the CAS, his PSO and ADC march into the office – the CAS begins another day.

It was the beginning of another routine day. The Chief's entourage arrived. Both the doors opened. Like clockwork the ADC ran around the car and fell into his regular place behind the CAS. The CAS, however, had lingered to have a word with his driver and had just begun to get out when the ADC completed the last part of his routine; banging the door closed. He banged the door hard with his right hand. Only when he moved forward – he noticed that nobody else was moving and that the CAS was not in front of him.

He looked back and found the Air Chief lying flat on the rear seat, both hands on his right jaw.

OLD MAPS

Anon

Flight Cadet Wamiq was flying a cross country mission with his instructor. When he reached close to Sakesar hills, the hills instead of being to his left appeared towards his right due to a wrong turn that he had executed.

When Wamiq took no corrective action for a while, the instructor advised him to look at his map and check where the hills were supposed to be on his track.

"To the left" replied Wamiq.
"They are to your right" pointed out the instructor.

Wamiq quietly looked at his map and told his instructor, "Sir you see this map is very old. Times have changed, new towns have come up. New mountains have come up, new maps need to come up too."

MUTUAL CHECK OUT

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

Two instructors at Risalpur took off for a mutual instrument rating mission for award of the highest instrument category 'Master Green' to each other. The first instructor passed the second and awarded him the Master Green.

The new Master Green promptly failed his check pilot.

DOG CHECK I

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

During the days of the F-16 induction in eighties, one C-130 would take off from Chaklala for the USA every Monday morning at 10:00 am. Strict anti-narcotics steps were being undertaken to ensure that no contraband drugs were carried on board. Sniffing dogs were brought in from a nearby Army Dog unit to inspect the entire luggage and the aircraft cabin. Officer Commanding Administration Wing (OC Admin Wing), normally a Group Captain, coordinated the entire operation. In March, 1984, I took a ride on one of these trips to the USA. Two days before our take off, following caution was posted on the Flying Wing notice board.

"All crew and passengers proceeding to the USA on Monday are to position their luggage outside the C-130 by 09:00 for dog check.

In case the dog is not available, OC Admin Wing will perform the dog check"

DOG CHECK II

Air Marshal Masood Akhtar

Initially, the "dog check" was carried out only when the aircraft were departing for USA. Once it was decided to perform the 'Dog Check' on the way back as well. Accordingly, a small cute sniffing dog "TEETU" was brought in from an Army unit.

TEETU went around, sniffed the entire luggage displaying no interest; and then suddenly it rushed towards a corner and wrapped

itself around a white bag which belonged to Squadron Leader Farooq. Intelligence operators' faces lit up with 'Jack Pot' dangling in front of their eyes. They dragged TEETU away and hurried to open the 'Bag of Drugs'. The bag contained nothing but dozens of chocolates.

Mr TEETU had decided to go for the call of stomach rather than the call of duty.

MAN'S FIRST SIN

Air Commodore Altaf Sheikh

I was commanding PAF Base Lower Topa and it was First CAS' inspection of my Base. All had been done to present a good impression.

After the visit to various units, which had gone rather well, all assembled in my office for a hot cup of tea and debrief.

It was a perfect September day; beautiful blue sky without a trace of cloud as cool breeze blew through the valley. Everyone seemed to be in a good mood.

The CAS, Air Chief Marshal Zulfiqar Ali Khan, asked me if there were any problems. I said, "None sir, except one. You may have noticed a large number of lovely apple trees, which had been carefully planted by my predecessors and bear fruit of very good quality. The heavy load of guests and visitors that we receive here during summers, literally attack the trees along with their children and remove all the fruit before it is even ripe. That's my only problem here," I said in a light tone.

The Chief in his usual graceful manner paused for a while and then looking towards ACAS (T), Air Commodore Waheed Butt said, "Well we don't want to be too hard on the visitors here; after all 'this' was the man's first sin".

THE ONLY MALE MEMBER

Air Commodore Altaf Sheikh

Squadron Leader Maculski, a Polish Officer was well-known as the pioneer of glider flying in the PAF. His wife Tula, also an accomplished glider pilot, helped him in his training courses. They kept a pair of beautiful brown Spaniel dogs, which they simply adored and were rarely seen without them. They were almost like children to them, since they had none of their own.

In 1958 Squadron Leader Maculski was commanding a Glider Training Wing at Chaklala, and a group of us was doing a short orientation course there.

One fine morning, when we reported for duty, we found Squadron Leader Maculski sitting in his office with his head lowered in his hands and obviously much grieved about something. This was unusual, because he was a very jolly person and was always very chirpy and happy.

We asked Squadron Leader Hayat (popularly known as Lucky Hayat), our course incharge, to find out the reason for his moroseness. After speaking to him, Squadron Leader Hayat came out and could hardly hide his smile but also appeared sad inside. He took us aside and told us that one of their pets had died last night and that was the reason for his lugubrious state. Maculski had said, "Lucky, the only male member of our family has died," and cried like a baby.

NAUKRI KA SAWAAL

Group Captain Abdul Ghaffar Khan

There was a function at the AHQs in 1980's and civilian dignitaries were invited including members of the then Majlis-e-Shoora. The members found themselves seated behind the Army brass. Unhappy

with the breach of protocol, they all decided to leave, the Chairman leading. The Air Staff was very worried at this unforeseen incident. They were in a fix. Quickly they dispatched an enterprising Wing Commander to try and retrieve the situation. The officer went and said something to the Chairman of the Majlis and soon, the Air Staff was surprised to see, that they all came back and quietly sat back on those very seats from where they had left in anger, only moments ago. Intrigued, the senior most officer present called the Wing Commander to one side and asked him as to what he had done to rescue a potentially explosive situation.

"Sir", replied the officer, "I told the Chairman that I was responsible for seating arrangements and that clearly I had goofed up. If they all left, - I would be court martialled and dismissed from service. I was a poor guy with nothing to fall back upon and my wife and children would starve. The Chairman of Majlis, much moved, had asked his colleagues to come back and sit on those very seats because it was the young boy's Naukri Ka Sawal".

GOTCHA

Anon

In the Squadron washroom there were two flaps – one over each urinal. One flap read, "We aim to pee, will you please aim too".

The other placard read, "In case of fire, lift flap".
When you lifted the flap, there was a placard that read, "Not now you idiot – only in case of fire".

When No 9 Squadron was equipped with supersonic F-104 fighter aircraft, the C-in-C Air Marshal Asghar Khan came calling. After the usual cup of tea, he walked into the toilet. When he came out after a few minutes there was a big smile on his face and he said,

"I got caught".

PAPER WORK

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

Squadron Leader Tawwab took the first F-86 Squadron from Sargodha to Dacca. When the Squadron landed at Delhi to re-fuel, the Indians offered him a large number of papers to be filled. He was also made to perform a number of trips between the ATC, operations and the customs. The Indian Wing Commander who was conducting the Squadron got quite cheesed off and said to Tawwab:

"When are you taking off?"
"When the weight of all these papers equals the weight of my aircraft" replied Tawwab and lowered his head to start filling in more papers.

MRS FAROOQ

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

Mrs Air Marshal Nur Khan was visiting the Ladies Club in Sargodha. As the introductions began, she was introduced to Mrs Farooq (Mrs Hamid Farooq), Mrs Farooq (wife of Farooq Habib), Mrs Farooq (wife of Farooq Feroz), Mrs Farooq (wife of Farooq Umer), and Mrs Farooq (wife of Farooq Najmi) all standing next to each other. She was absolutely shocked and said,

"Are you all married to the same guy? Then she looked at the next lady in the line and said,

"Are you also Mrs Farooq?"

DRESS CHANGE

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

Air Marshal Rahim Khan was invited to Cranwell Flying School UK as the Reviewing Officer on a winter graduation. He turned up at the Commandant's House in winter blues but without the great coat that everybody else would be attired in. Protocol demanded everyone to be in a similar dress. A ten minutes delay was ordered to have everybody de-great coated. The entire parade was shivering and chattering of teeth could be heard all around. The only person totally comfortable was Air Marshal Rahim – He didn't know that overcoats were to be worn on parade – but he knew it was extremely cold, and if you couldn't wear overcoats you wore a lot of thermals underneath.

CONCERNED PILOT

Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat

As Commandant PAF Academy, I was proceeding to Risalewala from Risalpur in a Mushshak aircraft. Soon after take off, the instructor pilot ferrying me took out a 'flying meal' box and offered it to me. Never having eaten a flying meal in the Mushshak before, I said "No". Next, he offered me a frost juice. Again I said 'No' but was quite impressed with efficiency of this young pilot and his concern for my well-being.

After crossing Potohar Plateau, I found that he was off track by ten miles. As he would not agree so I asked him to get out his flying map. He fiddled in all his pockets and found none.

I said, "Look you got a flying meal which we didn't need for an hour and twenty minutes trip but you didn't get the flying map which was absolutely essential. Some concern for my well-being".

GOOD PAINTINGS

Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat

A British Air Marshal visiting the DCAS (Operations) office at Air Headquarters noticed with interest the paintings by Hussaini decorating the walls. While leaving he said, "It is a pleasure to visit an Air Force officer's office and see all these beautiful painting of various aircraft. Indeed I feel on top of the world".

I smiled thinking that he was paying a routine compliment but he continued,

"Because any army mess that you visit, specially in the Frontier, most of the paintings depict Pathans beating the hell out of the British".

GOD HELPS THOSE……

Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat

Squadron Leader Ejazuddin and Flight Lieutenant Dogar started up 2 F-6 aircraft. Dogar had a problem and took some time to get his engines going. Meanwhile Squadron Leader Ejaz had taxied out and travelled half the way to the runway. Dogar opened a lot of power taxiing very fast in order to catch up with his leader. The leader, meanwhile, had reached the beginning of the runway and was calling his No 2 to join up with him. In order to obey his leader, Dogar had mustered so much speed that he could not hack the 180° turn on the runway and went into the Katchaa. There he promptly switched OFF to save his engines from FOD and called "ABORTING" to his leader. The leader never looked back, told his No 2 to proceed back to the tarmac and called the tower that he was proceeding for General Flying, opened both throttles wide and began his take off roll. Kamran Qureshi, Dogar's course mate sitting in the mobile control next to the runway came out, collected a few passers by and ran towards Dogar's

F-6. They all gave a big push to the fighter, pushed it back on the taxi track and sent Dogar's F-6 home under own power. Neither Ejaz, nor the tower was the wiser.

FLOWERS FOR VVIP

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

Ayub Khan visited No 9 squadron after it had been re-equipped with F-104 supersonic interceptors. Those days the lawns of Sargodha Base were absolutely barren. However the day the President arrived, we were surprised to see the lawns decorated so beautifully with flowers all around that it looked like a dream. Later, Ayub Khan went to see an F-104 fly past and aerobatics show. Then, contrary to the schedule, he decided to come back to the squadron for a chat with the pilots.

The flower pots were gone - taken away by the nursery guys – so was the dream lawn. Now it was full of potholes.

BLACK OUT

Air Commodore Shadab

As the deployment began in 2001 for "Ops Sentinel", a large convoy reached a Forward Air Base at 3:00 am. The headlights of all the trucks were blacked out. It was a pitch dark night and I asked the convoy commander the reason for blacking out the headlights when the hostilities had not begun.

"Sir these were the orders, to make sure if the Indian Air Force attacked suddenly, they won't be able to see the convoy."

"Then how did you find your way in the moonless night."

"Sir that was no problem", he replied, "The lead vehicle had search lights mounted on top."

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Air Commodore Shadab

The Squadron Commander and Flight Commander of a Search and Rescue squadron were not working in harmony. Flight Commander accused the Squadron Commander of being biased, picked up a few files of "proofs of the squadron commander's misdeeds" and ran off to the Base Commander's office to complain against his boss. The Squadron Commander followed suit, both officers entering the Base Commander's office at the same time. Base Commander looked up from his papers and decided to deal with the junior officer first.

"Yes Waris, what do you want?"
"Sir, you had asked me to give you a rundown on the officers' mess property situation. Here are the relevant files."
"And Umar, how about you?"
The OC Rescue Squadron was clean bowled and looked towards his No 2 to effect a "Rescue".
"Sir, he knows a good carpenter that would offer us a 30% rebate", offered Waris, and duly rescued his Boss.

OC Rescue Squadron had to search for a good carpenter giving a good rebate and lived in harmony with his Flight Commander ever after.

LUNCH, ANYONE

Wg Cdr Zafar Iqbal

Time: 1530 Hrs July 2005 **Scene:** DCAS (Trg Sectt)
Status: Air conditioner running loud and clear; OAT 41°C

Lascar Nazir enters an office and speaks to a lunch-less Flight Lieutenant Iffat Kulsoom:

Ma'am: I need a gumstick.
Wow! Drumstick! : What else? (is on the menu)
Ma'am: Gumstick.!!
Only Drumstick – Just bring it – I'm starving.

TAKE OVER

Wg Cdr Zafar Iqbal

When Mirza Zafar Hussain got promoted to the rank of Air Vice Marshal, he was posted as AOC (Air Officer Commanding) Northern Air Command. We asked him on day one if he had taken over from the Acting AOC Air Commodore Munawar and how was the handing/taking over ceremony. "Simple, "he replied. **"I just went to Munawar's office and told him to STOP ACTING".**

WELCOME TO AUSTRALIA

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

"If you don't behave or if you act like a criminal I'll send you to Australia" was the favourite phrase of Group Captain (Later Air Vice Marshal) Abid Rao. Australia meant Mianwali - Mianwali the desolate and arid base with no facilities of any kind – extremely hot and treacherous – Australia of the old. Abid Rao sent a couple of guys including Wing Commander xxxx across to Mianwali. Then he got promoted and was posted as Base Commander Mianwali.

On arrival, Wing Commander xxx received him and inquired, **"Sir who sent YOU to Australia".**

Cute Cadets

BAD WEATHER SCHEDULE

Squadron Leader Taimur

It was the perfect day that a flight cadet could ask for; total overcast, light drizzle and all the Instructor Pilots busy in having gupshup and pakoras.

Out of nowhere, we got the message to report in front of the scheduling board for flying. On reaching there, we found that two of my course mates were flying mutual. This was something totally unheard of, but it was right there – on the board!

The two happy cadets (Aviation Cadet Mujahid now Squadron Leader and Aviation Cadet Farooq now Squadron Leader) seen off by the other boys, booked out, strapped up in a Mushshak, and taxied out. At that time, the Instructor Pilots got a call from flight line that two cadets had booked out and taxied out together in ONE Mushshak……..PANDEMONIUM !!!!

One instructor pilot (Flt Lt Waleed now Wing Commander) ran after them on foot; another in a Mushshak. He gave them calls to taxi back to the tarmac and switch off. Using a rare presence of mind, the cadets performed a 180° turn on the taxi track, managed to crisscross with the other Mushshak, came back to the tarmac and switched off. What happened after that with us should be well understood. But what happened to the Instructor Pilot who initiated this drama can only be guessed.

CASABIANCA

Squadron Leader Abdullah

An angry T-37 instructor landing after a lousy training mission in Risalpur, off loaded his student on the parallel taxi track; and told him to start running in front of the aircraft. He also ordered him to follow the yellow line on the taxi track to stay in the dead centre. The student

started on the 3 Km long trek to the tarmac, his T-37 right on his tail. Soon the other T-37s started to land full stop and were surprised to find that that day the taxi speed being followed was the recommended fast walking pace. The aircraft in the front was bound by the gradually decelerating speed of the student and soon there was a beeline of about 20 T-37s; each instructor using his R/T to shout on the first aircraft to move quickly. The pilot of the lead T-37, under heavy fire now, tried which way to attract the attention of his student. Sometimes, he opened power on one engine, sometimes he moved up to nudge his student with the pitot tube and sometimes he tried to overtake the student from the left or the right – but the student only became more afraid with every move and would accelerate a little bit thinking that his instructor was unhappy with his slowing pace. Assailed by catcalls and continuous booing by other IPs, the instructor, meanwhile, was in tears. He tried waving at the student, tried to beg him – but which student in the Academy would dare to look back at his instructor! Ultimately the cadet's stamina sapped and his speed came to a slow walking pace. But obedient as he was, he maintained the centre line religiously.

As they approached the turning for the next taxiway, the instructor managed to nudge the students parachute hard with the pitot tube. Because of the turn, the surprised cadet's eyes fell on the instructor who was begging him to get off the taxi track. The student though not understanding the rationale for his Instructor Pilot's behaviour, understood his own body needs for relief, and moved off the centre line and off the taxi track.

The sweating IP heaved a sigh of relief and twenty T-37s moved up from snail's pace to their normal taxi speed to enter the tarmac before lunch.

OVERHEAD

Flight Lieutenant Masood

All solo aircraft flying in Risalpur training area were recalled due to bad weather. One Instructor Pilot was kept in the air, holding at pimple hill where another solo T-37 was also holding. To keep separation from him, Squadron Leader Nayyar, the Instructor Pilot in dual aircraft, asked the solo aircraft for position.

"Overhead", he replied.

Nayyar thought the solo was overhead the runway now. He called the solo again to confirm his position.

"Overhead", he replied again.

"Give me your position with respect to a specific point".

"Sir overhead you." Nayyar looked up and found his canopy full of another T-37.

LONG GLIDE TO BEVERLEY HILLS

Flight Lieutenant Yasin

In Risalpur, different forced landing fields have been identified and cadets routinely practice simulated flame-out patterns on these fields. Among these are Charsadda Dairy Farm, Abazai disused airstrip and "Beaver field" (where spray aircraft operate from).

A question in the morning emergency session was asked, "You are flying at 5000 feet, 10 NM north of Peshawar when you have an engine flame-out. Where will you land?"

"Beverley Hills."

NOT TO QUESTION WHY

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

An Iranian cadet who was heavy in size, was allergic to parade. One afternoon with the sun blazing down, this cadet asked the Chiefy (Chief Technician who used to conduct our drills) as to why should we do all this drill? The Chiefy said there is no why in Air Force. He again asked why should we do drill with a rifle? The Chiefy again said, "There is no why in Air Force". After marching a few steps, this Iranian cadet got out of the parade and sat down on the ground. The Chiefy shouted at the cadet, "Why are you sitting on the ground?" The cadet shouted back, "Chief, there is no "why" in the Air Force."

A QUICK SOLO?

Flight Lieutenant Naeem

Ground technician to a cadet signing in the authorization book next to the crew room after flying a solo mission in a T-37 aircraft.

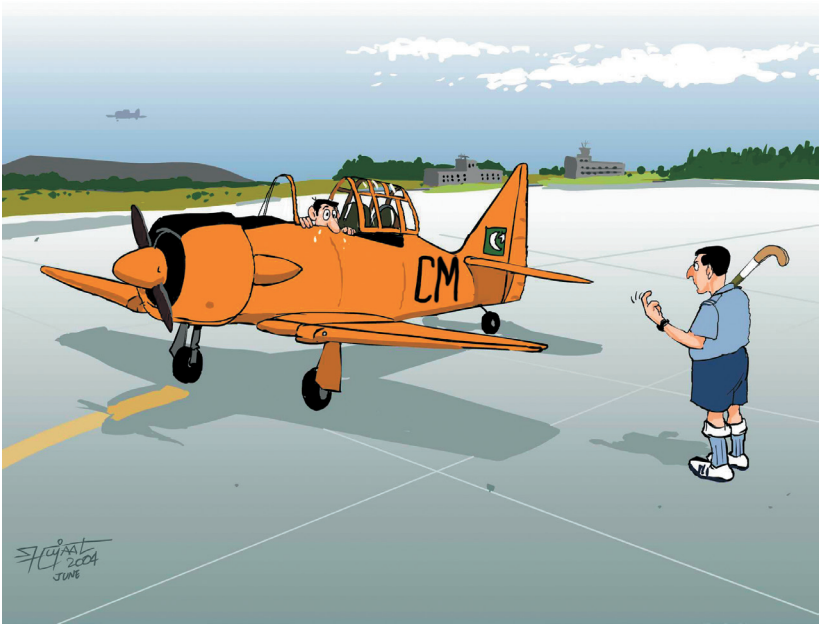
"Sir, could it be your pleasure to go back and switch off the engines of the aircraft before you go to the mess and sleep?"

AZIZ, AZIZ WHERE R U?

Air Vice Marshal Rehmat & Begum Rehmat

Flight Cadet Aziz took off in a T-6G on a solo general flying mission and headed towards his assigned area over Takht Bhai. He climbed to 8500 feet and set himself up for aerobatics. He spun the aircraft to left and then spun it to right. He climbed up again, looped the loop and rolled the barrel. He performed the aileron roll and the cuban eight. He did everything but one thing – he forgot to report his position to the control tower every ten minutes, as required by the SOP. He also forgot his call sign CM (Charlie Mike). The control tower called CM (Charlie Mike) again and again but the CM remained engrossed in his mission and never responded. The worst was assumed.

Flying was called off. All students returned to the tarmac. Flight Lieutenant Mast Khan Afridi was launched to try and locate the aircraft or its wreckage.



Afridi headed towards Takht Bhai, the flying area assigned to Aziz. Meanwhile, he gave many calls on R/T. “Charlie Mike this is Charlie Bravo.” Nothing. After trying a few times, he decided to take the bull by the horn. Now he started calling the cadet by his name.

“AZIZ, AZIZ, speak up.”
“AZIZ, AZIZ, where are you?”

Flight Cadet Aziz suddenly woke up to his name being called over and over again and offered a weak and meek “hullo”. Mast Afridi caught onto the ray of hope.

“Hullo who is this?”
“Sir, I am Aziz, Aziz, hockey wala”. Afridi was now less tense knowing that the “Lost” Aziz was a hockey player.
“Aziz this is Flight Lieutenant Afridi. What is your position?”
“Centre half, Sir centre half.”
“Centre half kay Bachay – where are you?” Now Mast Afridi was angry.
“I am here sir, where are you?”
“Where I am – I am on your tail. I am going to be on your tail till you land – and I am going to step on it after you land!”

Flight Cadet Aziz landed back. With due ceremony, Flight Lieutenant Mast stepped on his tail and stood on it for a good one hour. He made Aziz do all the things that cadets can be made to do.

Aziz never missed another position report in his life.

BODY SALT

Flight Lieutenant Manzoor Chaudhry

As cadets in the first term, we were on an exercise in a hilly terrain. The weather was hot and the medical officer had briefed us how dangerous it could be for a person to lose the salt in his body. He also issued everyone with two small packets of salt which we were required to dissolve in the water and drink @ one per day to keep the body salts at appropriate level. These packets, we put in the breast pockets of our coverall. During the long walk, we came across a running stream and decided to wade in it. The current was so strong that we were soon exhausted and decided to rest for a while. Sleep caught up with us and when we woke up, a good two hours had gone by-sufficient time for the salt, which had become wet, courtesy our walk in the stream, to dissolve and then dry on our overalls. One of cadets looked at this, now all white overall top and fell on the ground saying

"Oh I am dead. I am dead. I am dead; I've lost all the salt from my body."

TRAINING – THE CHINESE STYLE

Air Marshal Khursheed Anwar Mirza

Location: Tienzen Base, China located between Beijing and the Coast where the last Chinese Emperor had been working as a Gardener during the last days of his life

Date/Time:	January, 1966, 0900 hours
Temperature:	– 20° C
Wind:	15 knots
Chill factor:	– 25°C

Soon after the 65 War, Pakistani pilots were dispatched to China to train on F-6 fighter aircraft. While in Pakistan, we had cozy classrooms and went to familiarize ourselves with the aircraft systems in comfortable temperatures, the Chinese tended to exclude such factors from their training methodology. So off we went to the aircraft parked in the open, temperatures twenty below freezing and winds rising upto 15 knots. We set there in the blistering cold cockpits, our faces ice blue, memorizing aircraft instruments for a blindfold check within a given time frame of thirty minutes. After half an hour when the Chinese instructor arrived and blindfolded me, I managed to point out all the instruments but could not correctly remember the small graduations on the airspeed indicator.

The Chinese instructor gave his verdict, "Friend will have to sit in the cockpit for another half an hour to memorize the dials properly if he wants to be a pilot on the F-6".

Blue-faced I replied, "Friend is not certain whether he will make a pilot on the F-6 or not **but he is certain that he will die of pneumonia if he sits here for next half an hour".**

HOAR LOU 825

Group Captain Salim Metla

Noorullah Charlie had just received his BSc degree from the University of Faisalabad when an ad in the newspaper attracted his attention. "Join Pakistan Air Force as a GD Pilot and get 825 Ruppees Per Month". Eight hundred and twenty five rupees per month was a lot of money in the sixties. Charlie was sold to the ad lock, stock and barrel. He passed all his tests, joined the 34th GD and within a year began his flying. Now he was within handshaking distance of laying his hands on the promised 825. After one mission, he was to handover his aircraft to Flt Cdt Ehsan, a final termer for a solo flight.

His instructor Flt Lt Younis got out of the rear cockpit and a junior technician got in to secure the seat. While doing so, the technician hit the throttle with his tail end. The aircraft roared with the hit, the throttle full power and took Charlie by surprise. There were aircraft parked to his right and to his left. What could he do. So he left everything in the hands of Almighty. The aircraft switched to right and kept on going around and around. Ultimately, it stood on its nose and stopped. When the rescuers reached the aircraft and opened the canopy, they heard Charlie mumbling over and over again.

"Hoar Lou 825, Hoar Lou 825".This is how you get your 825. What a way to get Rs 825?

Charlie became a good forest officer and is now amongst the top brass in forest department.

WHO KNOWS THE FUTURE

Air Vice Marshal Younis

During early sixties, I was posted to Risalpur as an instructor on T-6G Harvard aircraft. One day I was flying a navigation mission with a student Flt Cdt Shah. Normally, a quiet fellow, he would ask me every fifteen minutes that where I would force land if the engine quit on us at that particular moment. I would search and point out a field to him. Ultimately, I got fed up with this constant question and told him,

"Shut up, its not going to quit on us".
"Who knows the future" he replied.

Phut, Phut, Phut - went the engine. In precisely five minutes we were in the field I had pointed out to him moments ago. Shah took his time to get out of the aircraft, looked at me and said,
"Sir who says who knows the future".

TARGET PRACTICE

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

When we were in the first term at PAF Initial Training Wing at Lower Topa, instilling of discipline was the order of the day. We would be drilled and grilled every day and sent around the parade square with rifle above the head for the slightest transgression, committed or imagined. As always happens, a few cadets became the favourite targets of our drill instructor, Flight Sergeant Rashid; among them was Flt Cadet Raza.

So Raza was being checked for everything; Raza stand properly; Raza salute properly; Raza don't be slow; Raza you were fast – Raza, Raza Raza. On his part, Raza protested that he was being checked by the instructor whether he made a mistake or not - Flt Sgt Rashid disagreed. One morning when the SNCO had checked Flt Cdt Raza again and again, Raza called out in a loud voice, "Flight, It has been only five minutes since the drill started and you have checked me three times already --- even today". "What's so special today? Are you excused from doing proper parade.... Rashid swirled towards the voice with venom, looked at Raza and froze in mid sentence.

Raza was sick that day and had been standing outside the flight.

WALKING MINIMAS

Air Commodore S N A Jilani

It was a foggy winter morning of 1955. 25th GD(P) was supposed to be running from the Cadets' Mess to the classrooms during their first six months in the College. Flight Cadet Mejan-ur-Rehman (An East Pakistani) of 25th GD (P) had reported sick and was proceeding later to work. He took a chance to walk. The Ground Squadron Commander,

a Flying Officer cycling from the Cadets Mess to the Technical Area, saw the Flight Cadet scrounging and asked him the reason for not running. The Flight Cadet smartly forwarded the excuse of poor visibility. The Ground Squadron Commander accepted the excuse and started cycling up. A little distance up, he heard the noise of a T-6G taking off from the runway. The Ground Squadron Commander got infuriated, cycled back to the Flight Cadet and shouted at him, "You, xx@#$ man, want to make a fool of me. If an aircraft can fly in this visibility, you can also x$#@ well run". Flight Cadet Mejan-ur-Rehman began to say, "Sorry, Sir but that is an aeroplane" then saw the man-eating look in his superior's eyes and took off like a hare.

LENGTH OF THE RUDDER CABLE

Air Commodore SNA Jilani

"With the Flight Commander in chair, all pilots of the Squadron were trying to excel each other in the Questions/Answers session regarding flying and the aircraft. I decided to ask a difficult question and questioned about the length of rudder cable of an F-86. Nobody knew the answer. I did not know it either. All were quiet. Flt Cdr asked me to answer. I quickly answered, "103.58". The Flight Commander said, "Well done, why the hell nobody else knows the answer"? I was amused to note that the Flight Commander himself did not know but was trying to impress the pilots as Mr Know All. I was worried that somebody might inquire from the Engineering Wing and prove me wrong. On the contrary, the Flight Commander reassessed at the end of the session, and said, "Jilani knows a lot about the aircraft but such details are not necessary for pilots". I was glad that my fraud had worked.

ROZ-E-AWWAL

Air Commodore SNA Jilani

During Aero-engine class in the Hangar at Risalpur, our newly appointed instructor introduced himself to us and commenced his instructional period. Half way, he told me to get up from the seat and to stand next to the wall. Next day, he repeated his orders to me almost half way through the period. The day after, he showed a lot of annoyance and told me to always stand next to the wall during his classes. I obeyed. After a week, he called me to his office and asked me, "Why do you smile at me whenever I am delivering a lecture". I was surprised and denied the charge; but apologized if I ever gave that impression. Years passed. I was Base Commander at a Base as an Air Commodore when he was also posted as an instructor in one of our organizations but in the rank of a Group Captain. He called on me. As soon as he took the chair in my office, I got up and stood next to the wall. He smiled, got up, embraced me and said

"Sir that was Gurba Kushtan Roz-e-Awwal".

WAIT TILL TOMORROW, SIR

Wing Commander Rafique

It was a hot sizzling day in Risalpur. Flying Officer Jehangir and his student Flight Cadet Saeedudin landed after flying the last mission. By the time they taxied their aircraft back to the tarmac, it was nearly two o'clock in the afternoon. After switching off the engine, as the instructor tried to open the canopy, it moved back a few inches on the rails and jammed. The mechanics were called in but the canopy refused to budge; meanwhile Jehangir roasted in the cockpit, now a sunroom. The student seeing the plight of his instructor ran to the canteen and fetched a mug of tea. He slid it in to Jehangir and said,

"Sir take this cup of tea and keep sitting here.
We'll fly right from here tomorrow morning".

ASSURED LANDING

Wing Commander Rafique

Flight Cadet Naseem went on his first solo on the T-6G Harward. Every time, he came into land his wheels hit the runway, the aircraft bounced and Naseem executed a go around. After another four attempts Naseem located the root cause of aircraft's inability to touch down - the lowered wheels. He selected his wheels UP and came into a sure landing.

He was right.

The aircraft did not get airborne again,
neither did he, ever after.

LANGUAGE FINESSE

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

I, for one, was never much for curbing human freedom, even while I was a cadet. So one day I decided to wear socks of my own choosing instead of what the service prescribed. I like blue colour, so I wore blue socks. Unfortunately, Flight Lieutenant Nawaz, my flight commander, who somehow enjoyed looking at the ground level more than at the eye level, spotted my "independent-minded tendencies" and decided to nip the evil in the bud.

"Zafar, carry out three extra drills - and better wear black socks next time - all the time".
"Yes Sir".

Now extra drill, a procedure that is carried out in the afternoons when the whole decent world is asleep, was obviously not to my liking and definitely against my "freedom of human beings" theory. So after one extra drill I ordered myself excused from further punishment, hoping that amongst the big crowd of extra drillers nobody would miss me.

After three days, I was fairly astonished when during the parade the GSTO (General Service Training Officer) Sqn Ldr G A Khan parked himself squarely in front of me and proceeded to have a dialogue:¬

"Zafar, you were awarded three extra drills."
"Yes sir."
"How many did you carry out?"
"Only ONE, Sir."
"Why?"
"I thought nobody would notice."
"But somebody did."
"Yes sir, very unfortunately."
"Carry out seven more extra drills."
"Yes Sir."

Now there was no escape. Every single afternoon like clockwork, I accepted the usurpation of my freedom and reported for extra drill at 1530 sharp – rifle and all in tow.

On the fifth day, Squadron Leader G A Khan appeared on the scene.

He approached within hand shaking distance of "the accused" and spoke yet once more.

"Zafar Iqbal no escapes this time?"
"No sir."
"How many days were you supposed to be on extra drill?"
"One week Sir."
"What day of the week is it today?"
"Sir, today is Tuesday". and I almost immediately understood what he was asking.
"No, I mean what day out of the seven days is it today?"
"Sir, today is Tuesday". Now I was enjoying the freedom of use of words.
"No, I mean – well never mind – you carry on".

I interpreted the meaning of 'carry on' to my advantage, put the rifle to port, gave him a smart butt salute and trooped off – very fast – before he could use the other meaning of carry on.

MAYDAY, MAYDAY

Air Cdre Asim Zaheer

Mayday call is a universal SOS call, indicating grand trouble. In the world of flying, the call is given when an aircraft is in danger of not being able to sustain flight normally; this could be due to a mid-air collision, structural damage or, in case of a single engine aeroplane, due to engine failure. Since an engine failure, especially at low level, doesn't give much time to the pilot for his emergency actions, the new trainees are grilled hard in immediately transmitting a PROPER mayday call announcing the pilot's intentions and then dealing with the emergency. This helps the control tower in marshalling help and guiding the search and rescue efforts.

One day the following call was relayed by a cadet who was on the controls of an MFI-17 single engine piston trainer at PAF Academy Risalpur:

SP: "Mayday Mayday Mayday, this is Bismil 27, engine flamed out, trying for a relight – if no relight will force land. Mayday.

Tower: What is your position?

SP: "I am on the taxi track".

CLEAR PRIORITY

Group Captain Hussaini

Courtesy and respect must be shown to the seniors at all times, obedience to them almost unquestioned. No armed service can function without following these basic rules. These ABCs are grilled into the new entrants to the Academy with such zeal that in no time enthusiasm and shock effect transform an absolutely decent and God fearing civilian into a totally disciplined, senior fearing soldier.

So when a young man becomes a cadet, one of the rules given to follow is as under:-

> *"Anytime a senior cadet is sighted, the first termer will wish the senior by shouting at the top of his voice "Asslam-o-Alaikum Sir". Wishing is to be executed REGARDLESS of what state the junior cadet may be in at the time of sighting. No IFS and BUTS."*

A cadet who had just arrived at Risalpur followed "wishing the seniors" order fully and at all possible or impossible times. One day, however, his intelligence and discretion were put to extreme test. This was his third day at the Academy and he had been through a lot of ragging by day and by night. His actions and behaviour had been de-civilized and he could remember almost nothing of his past life. He was a deeply religious boy and today finally, he had found a few minutes to share with God, alone.

He was engaged in offering his heavenly duties soon after sunset. Seated on his prayer mat, facing the Kaaba, he was almost through with his prayers. Solemnly, he turned his head to the right and quietly spoke the ritual words Asslam-o-Alaikum Wa Rehmat-Ullah. Then he turned his head towards the left and had just begun to say "Asslam-u-Alaikum" when he suddenly sighted a senior cadet – one who had been terrorizing him and his course mates for the past three days. He hesitated not at all and carrying out the minimal amendment required went on top of his voice **"Asslam-o-Alaikum Sir"**.

God could be mollified later.

SMALL RUNWAY

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

Flight Cadet Mouldi Hadi Belgasim, a Libyan cadet under training at PAF Academy, Risalpur, was flying solo in a T-37 jet trainer. After completing his mission, he descended to the circuit altitude, 2100 feet,

to join the landing pattern. When he announced to the control tower that he was on finals, the tower unable to see any aircraft coming in for landing approach, asked him to go around and make another approach. When another two approaches went abandoned in a similar fashion, the tower asked Mouldi to confirm if he was sure that he was lined up with Risalpur runway:-

"Sure, I am lined up with Risalpur runway."
"But I cannot see you while I can see all other aircraft. Are you sure there is nothing wrong?" asked the control tower.
"Nothing wrong with me", replied Mouldi, "But something is definitely wrong with the runway."
"In that?" asked the tower.
"In that, "confided Mouldi, in a low tone, who was sitting at 12,100 feet, instead of 1200 ,

"The runway is very small today."

FAN STOP

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

Engine failure immediately after take off is a very serious emergency, especially in single engine propeller aircraft like T-6G Harvard. Since there is no provision of ejecting, the aircraft must be put down back on the runway if possible or must be landed straight ahead. Instructors routinely give practice to the students by simply pulling the throttle back soon after take off and give a call of FAN STOP to the control tower indicating "Practice Engine Failure".

One day the control tower received the following call:-

"Risalpur this is Blue Bell 108 ---- I have real fan stop.
Believe you me, I have real fan stop".

ONE THING AT A TIME

Air Marshal Qaiser Hussain

One of the foreign students at PAF academy Risalpur was having problems with his flying and was handed over to me for a change of instructor. I found out that he would get so engrossed in controlling the aeroplane that he would forget about giving R/T calls at designated places and times. Many times, I reminded him to give his calls on Downwind, Base and Finals, but every time he would forget.

Ultimately, I told him, "Look here; somebody has to give these calls".

His response was immediate, "Sir I give call, you fly.
You give call, I fly. Two things cannot happen
at the same time".

WHICH MIKE?

Air Vice Marshal Abdul Razzaq

One of the flying exercise undertaken at PAF academy Risalpur is "practice diversion to Peshawar". This is to familiarize cadets with the Peshawar runway in case they find Risalpur unavailable for some reason and have to land at this alternate airfield. The practice also helps keep a cadet's blood pressure normal in case of actual diversion. The procedure involves changing frequencies from Risalpur to Cherat area control to whom the aircraft is required to pass its call sign, flight level and estimated time of arrival at destination. The pilot is also required to inform the control if the aircraft is operating under visual meteorological conditions or instrument meteorological conditions referred to as Victor Mike (for VMC) or India Mike (for IMC) in flying jargon.

Flt Cdt Bashir flying his T6-G (callsign Charlie Mike) on practice diversion from Risalpur to Peshawar passed all relevant information except the met conditions he was flying under. Cherat promptly called,

"Confirm India Mike or Victor Mike."
"Negative, negative. It is Charlie Mike". Prompt came the reply, rendering the controller speechless.

LOOK OUT FOR THE SQN CDR GOD IS NO PROBLEM

Air Vice Marshal Abdul Razzaq

A young Pilot Officer just after getting airborne in an F-86 found to his horror that his leader had aborted. Realizing that he had to fend for himself, he tried to calm his nerves. Forgetting to release the mike button, he proceeded to console himself, "Sunny don't worry. What is the big deal? People die in traffic accidents - also in air accidents. Oh

mother! You have other sons ----- also daughters. Anyway, I wasn't much of a son to you. Life is in the hands of God. He gave me life – so what if he takes it away. Anyway, Oh God! I know you are very kind. It is the squadron commander I am worried about."

His Squadron Commander was also hearing all this on the radio. He didn't take away his life; he just took away his flying.

ESTIMATING DESTINATION MIANWALI

Air Marshal Masood Akhtar

A solo cadet on navigation from Risalpur to Mianwali in T6-G called Cherat Control and offered his flight details, but omitted to give Cherat his Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA). Cherat called and asked him for ETA Mianwali.

"Standby one, standby one", said the flight cadet. Then quite clearly over the radio came his voice calculating the timing of each leg.

"Do tay do Chaar, Chaar tay Chhay Dhas, Dhas tay Utth Atharan - Atharan tay Baaran tee. Cherat I am estimating Mianwali thirty minutes from now".

THE FLAG HOISTING CEREMONY

Air Commodore Javaid Sabir

At the PAF Academy, one senior cadet directed our course, the junior term cadets, to hoist the flag at 4 O' clock in the morning – a tough call indeed, to be ready, showered and dressed up in uniform at such an early hour. After a few days of torture one of our course mates suggested, to the liking of everyone, that instead of all taking

this unusual punishment, he would sacrifice for the rest and undertake the responsibility to hoist the flag all by himself.

The next morning, we were woken up with loud barking by the same senior to fall in outside. As we assembled with our eyes half closed, we saw "the volunteer" standing sheepishly in his sleeping suit, squadron flag draped around his left arm. Senior cadet announced his verdict that the same drill will continue for a month.

Our course mate told us later, that he was hoisting the flags with proper "whistle" and "loud commands". The senior hearing the loud words of commands had woken up, glanced outside and was flabbergasted to see a solitary sleeping suit clad person carrying out the drill. His explanation for not doing that exercise quietly and shouting out commands was "I wanted it to look real".

The course invited the wrath of the senior, and the "volunteer" invited the wrath of the course mates!

A GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT

Air Vice Marshal Abdul Sami Toor

Way back in fiftees when one rupee was a big deal, one senior cadet challenged another to a five rupee bet if he could land his T6-G Harvard on the disused and prohibited grassy strip at Akora Khattak, get out and relieve himself. His challenge was accepted.

While on a solo navigation flight the "challenged" lowered down from his cruising altitude, looked about his aircraft and finding no other aircraft around, set the aircraft down on the grass strip. He parked his plane, left the engine running, opened the canopy and keeping his parachute strapped on walked out towards the bushes about 70 meters away. Above him, he found another T6-G approach. He remembered his friend promising to do so - making sure that his bet was paid only on completion of the contract. He waved jauntily and proceeded to give final touches to the contract. When he came out of the bush,

contract fulfilled, he found himself daydreaming. He felt as if there were two Harvards on the ground instead of one. In his dream still, he saw someone climb out of the second aircraft and climb into the cockpit of his aircraft. Then, to his horror, both the aeroplanes, opened full power and took off one by one. His aeroplane had been stolen right in front of his eyes, his dream changed into reality.

Then both the aircraft made a circle, came back above him, both the pilots waving a Bon Voyage, then turned and flew off towards Risalpur.

The poor cadet, parachute on his shoulders, took a long walk to the GT Road and still walked for a long long while to get himself a ride on a donkey cart to Nowshera - those days the buses were few and nobody had even seen what a wagon looked like. Finally another ride to Risalpur and a Tonga brought the sweltering and sweating cadet to the Cadets' Mess. Immediately, he called the control tower and was advised to narrate his story to the Assistant Commandant, Group Captain Saeedullah.

"Sir, it was broad daylight robbery. Somebody stole my aircraft right in front of me."
"I did."
"Sir-----"
"Yes, I stole your aircraft in front of you."
"Sir---"
"And also I am stealing your job."
"Sir, Sir."
"--- in front of you."

He didnt get his five rupees as well.

STOW AWAY

Air Commodore Ahmad Salam

In all aircraft fitted with ejection seats, it is a usual practice to remove the pins from the ejection seat before taxiing out. After the pins are removed, they are shown to the ground crew and stowed in side pocket. Only then do the ground crew remove the chocks and allow the aircraft to move forward.

This student pilot on his first mission was, soon after start up, told to remove and ***stow*** the pins. He removed the pins, opened the canopy, and ***threw*** them out of the cockpit.

RELAX ----- BOY

Air Commodore Abdul Ghaffar

An instructor trained in USA and used to the American ways of instruction landed in Risalpur. He was immediately sent up with a student to fly his solo check in the dual engine T-37 jet trainer. Unlike the procedure followed in Risalpur, where no engine out emergency

is practised during the check, the US trained instructor pulled one throttle back soon after take off simulating single engine failure.

The cadet not expecting this situation, panicked. He couldn't control the aircraft and it began to lose altitude. Only 100 feet or so above the ground level, the instructor took over the controls, pushed both throttles full forward and began to nurse the aircraft up. Then he saw the look of distress on the student's face (who must had been thinking he had failed the check). He told the student to ***"Cheer up"***.

"Yes sir, ***Gear up****", replied the student and* ***raised the gear lever up.***

The aircraft sank at once due to the sudden loss of lift. Now the student thought he was absolutely doomed and his career finished.

The instructor managed to level off very close to the ground having full power on both engines now and said to his student, ***"Come on Relax"***

*"****Yes sir, Flaps,"*** *he acknowledged* ***and raised the flaps****.*

The instructor barely managed to pull up - but only after scraping the ground, the loss of lift was so sudden.

The Americanized IP learned to de-Americanize soon after!

THANK YOU FOR THE SALUTE

Air Commodore Asim Zaheer

There was the cadet who was scheduled for his first chock solo on MFI-17 in PFT. Very delighted, he went to the tarmac, started the aircraft, in the heat of the moment forgot to put the flaps down and hurriedly but proudly started to taxi out.

Almost every ground crew present there gave him the flaps signal but rather than getting them down, he would either give a thumb up

or a salute to that particular ground crew. He was almost exiting the tarmac when the OC who luckily was witnessing everything, drove his car in front of his aircraft, forcing him to stop.

He flew that mission, came back and spent the rest of the day orbiting the building. On asking why he was saluting and giving the thumb up, the reply was simple.

"Yaar! Mein tau samjha kay who sab meri solo kee khushi mein salute kar rahai hain."

(I thought they are all saluting me congratulating for my first chock solo)

THAT IS HOW YOU...

Air Commodore Asim Zaheer

During our primary flying training we had an instructor who was very touchy about touch downs. Whenever a student made a hard landing, he would snub him very harshly. One day when he saw 3-4 bad landings from a student, he really lost his cool and said, "Your flying is pathetic, I will show you an ideal circuit pattern and a "Chick" touch down." He flew an ideal circuit and came in for landing saying, "See that's how speed looks dead at 80 Knts, the needle is stuck with glue, not dancing like yours. See how runway undershoot looks. This is how we round out smoothly; see this is an ideal round out, not like yours and now we fly parallel to ground not the camel ride like yours and smoothly bring throttle to idle." But on that day Mr Murphy intervened and the aircraft hit the ground very hard, bouncing a few times. The instructor recovered quickly to continue his patter,

"And see that's how you make the touch downs, very poor."

BUTT SALUTE

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

We were sweating profusely on parade at PAF College Risalpur for sometime when the Sergeant Incharge decided to give us a break and allowed us to sit in the shade. Many mangoose were loose and moving in and out of their holes under the big tree close to which we sat. Flight Cadet Carapiet sat ready with the naked bayonet poised at the lip of a hole awaiting the emergence of a mangoose. The minute Carapiet pierced the head of one of the mangoose, the training officer Flight Lieutenant J S Malik arrived at the scene. Everybody jumped to attention, brought the rifles to slope arm and offered the butt salute to the officer- carcass of the mangoose proudly displayed at the bayonet of Carapiet's rifle.

NO KIDDING

Air Commodore Altaf Sheikh

The news of Cadet Khan being married is broadcasted in one classroom at Risalpur:

"Hey guys! Do you know Cadet Khan is married?"

"No kidding!"

"Yes three kidding. Two sons and one daughter."

WHY AREN'T ANY FLOWERS GROWING HERE

Air Commodore Altaf Sheikh

During one of the inspections of the Cadets' Mess area, Group Captain Dass, Commandant PAF Risalpur, noticed a small barren patch behind the cadets' living area. In his usual style he said, "Why aren't any flowers growing here", and moved on. He was known as a hard taskmaster.

A few days later, he happened to pass by the same area and noticed that a lovely bed of flowers (fully matured) had replaced the barren patch. Without any remark, he passed on pleased with the general inspection. We were all dumbfounded----to say the least.

Later on, it was discovered that after his remark, a young enterprising cadet John Carapiet, on the very next day of the commandant's first visit, had the whole place dug up. He put fully-grown flowers in their flower pots completely buried below the fresh surface, giving the impression as if it were a natural bed of flowers.

Cadet John Carapiet graduated soon after that, so no one really found out the secret of overnight growing of flowers behind Cadets' Mess area, till much later.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Anonymous

We were very intrigued when told that as part of our initial issue at PAF college Risalpur, we would also be provided with housewives. Imagine our disappointment when the "Housewife" turned out to be nothing more than a packet containing two needles, a few buttons and some length of thread.

FUEL CONSERVATION

Squadron Leader Inam

As a traditional practice, when the student pilot of a T-37 aircraft doesn't perform well in the mission, the IP after the mission on parallel taxi track switches off the left engine and asks the SP to get out of aircraft and walk back to the flight line, which is over 4 Km distance. One day an instructor after landing, switched off the engine so as to ask the student to leave the aircraft (engine is required to be switched off because when you get out of aircraft you are right in front of intake area). The instructor asked the SP, do you know why I switched off the engine. The SP very innocently replied:

"Sir, fuel low level warning light has come on, so you want to conserve fuel"

The instructor goes "Oh yes, I want to conserve the fuel. Now get out of aircraft and start pushing the aircraft so that I can switch off the other engine as well to conserve more fuel."

PROFESSIONALISM

Air Commodore Hasan

A student pilot taxiing out did not clear the area and hit an aircrew standing to his right. The mobile called him on R/T.

"Tango 126 you know, you have hit an aircrew."

The student looked to his right, saw the aircrew lying on the ground holding his head in both hands and replied:

"Affirmative, Risalpur. You are correct. I confirm your observation. Request line up and take off."

WEEKEND DEAR!

Squadron Leader Rahim Shahab

During PFT days, a cadet was flying with his instructor pilot. As he was not able to perform well in the mission, the IP stopped his weekend. When they were taxiing back before crossing the main runway, the IP said to the SP, "If you give a good call for crossing active runway, then your weekend will be opened". The SP got very conscious and in his best style called on the R/T:

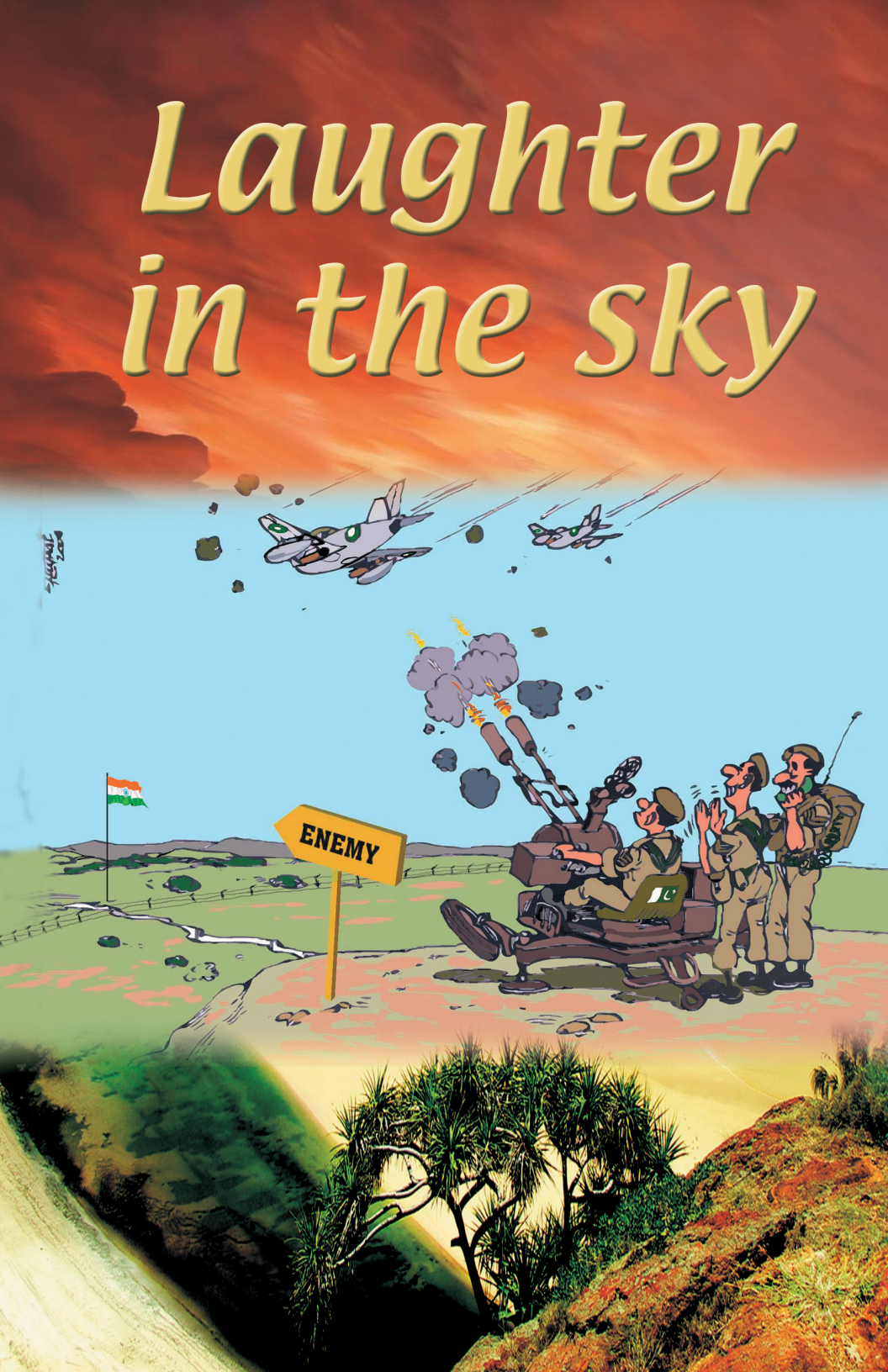
"Mobile 56, permission to cross the main, weekend open."

AREA SOLO

Flight Lieutenant Masood

There were many new solo students flying their first area solos in their Mushshaks. Each cadet was designated a specific area to operate in and practice his aerobatics etc. After a while one solo Mushshak reported that another Mushshak was operating in his area– then another aircraft made the same report, then another. Within forty-five minutes, twelve aircraft had reported one Mushshak each. Later, it was found that Aviation Cadet Noor had been flying through all areas maintaining 6000 feet because he had been scheduled for AREA SOLO.

Laughter in the sky

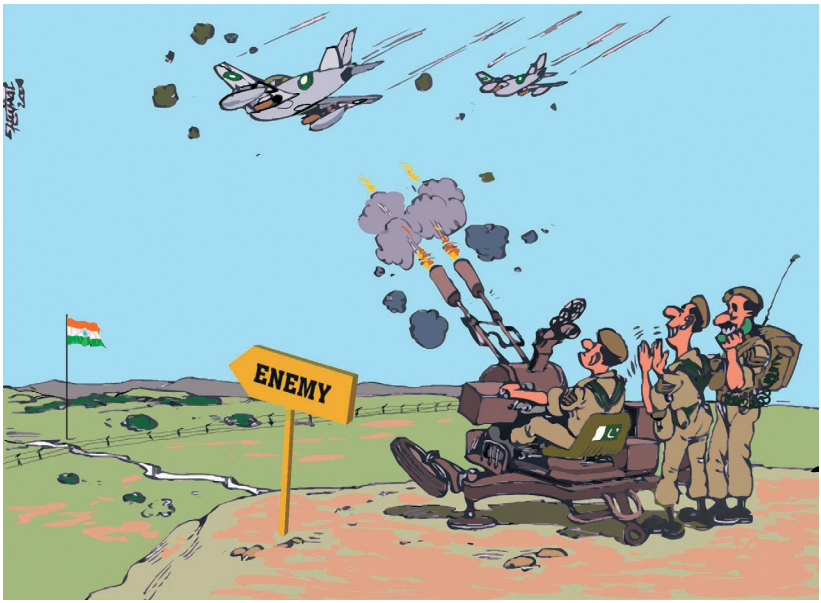


JUMPY SOLDIERS

Air Commodore Akbar

When the soldiers are fatigued, tired and weary, they become jumpy. They jump to conclusions and are likely to jump at everything they see and come across.

It was a hot sultry September afternoon. The 1965 war had been raging for a few days. The Indian and Pakistani armies were mixed up with each other on various fronts including Sulaimanki. Somewhere on that front, the Pakistani commanders decided that the situation merited air intervention in support of own army. Pakistan Air Force was, therefore, assigned the mission, and four F-86s took off for providing ground support to the beleaguered army unit. As per procedures, strict radio silence was being maintained. As the Sabres reached their target, the leader pulled up to attack the Indian army units. He nicely rolled in for the attack. While still a good half mile



short, the ack ack started firing all around him. He was certain that he was still over Pak Army positions.

He yelled on his radio:

"For God's sake stop firing – these are own aircraft."
Pat came the reply "Don't worry sir – these are own guns."

THE BIG DEAL

Squadron Leader Ehsan

An Army MFI -17 coming into land at Islamabad International was asked to orbit on downwind leg. After a few orbits, he called the tower requesting reasons for delay.

"An Airbus coming in for priority landing. He is single engine."
"What's the big deal, I am single engine too."
"Well – the big deal is –that he had two engines to begin with!"

PARROTS IN HELICOPTER

Squadron Leader Aziz-ur-Rehman

Operational language of Pakistan Air Force is different from that of the Army Aviation. When Air Force and Army Aviation interact, interesting situations like this may occur.

"I along with another controller Flying Officer Arshad was performing duty in the Operations room on radar. A flight plan was delivered by Sector Operation Centre (SOC) to provide Flight Following Service (FFS), to an Army helicopter from Dhamial Base to Mangla. Soon the helicopter called our radar for assistance on R/T. Promptly, the radar enquired from the army flier of his ground position. The pilot boldly announced his ground position with respect to many places but still we did not pick him on the radar. Some Army helicopters are equipped with IFF equipment (Identification Friend or Foe normally called Parrots) which if activated, chances of pick up increase on radar. My co-controller deciding to try that method, instantaneously enquired from the helicopter pilot, "Confirm Parrots on board". The pilot replied forthrightly,

"Negative, Sir no live animals are on board.
Only Brigadier Rab Nawaz."

A MATTER OF CREDIBILITY

Air Vice Marshal Altaf

Flight Lieutenant Manzoor Choudhry was a transport pilot flying Bristol Freighters. He was a fair and square man: humble, honest and down to earth. He lived and slept by the rules; and never did anything wrong or out of place. Still he was a pilot and a young one at that.

One day, he was flying his Bristol Freighter during a low-level exercise "Janus". After completing the Exercise the crew requested

the captain for a bit of fun and frolic. Manzoor's sense of discipline was prevailed upon by his youth and sense of bravado. So Manzoor, the meek descended from his comfortable one thousand feet and came down. He came down – and kept on coming down. Everyone in the crew cheered. Seeing things in three dimensions was a treat – trucks painted in their dazzling colours, children sitting atop the buses, women washing clothes and washing themselves in the nullahs. Cheering made Manzoor very happy. He felt elated – and decided that now it was his duty to his crew to display his total mastery over the aircraft. So Manzoor Ch came further down. The cheering increased – there seemed no place to come down – but perhaps a foot or two – may be three. More cheering ---- then a thud ----- and sudden deceleration. The cheering died. The co-pilot was absolutely quiet. Manzoor understood that the trees had been too close – or he had been too close to the trees. The final three feet simply had not existed. His right wing had gone through a tree top – barely – but still through.

Climbing up to two thousand feet, his mind worked feverishly. What excuse would be the most suitable --- and more important, acceptable? What would the ground crew think – What would the engineering officer say – and above everything – what excuse was the officer commanding most likely to believe? The crew put their heads together. Various options were studied, analyzed and discarded ---- and it was ultimately decided – as almost always is, that the blame must be squarely placed at the doorstep of some poor anonymous, untraceable, dead bird.

A confident looking Manzoor Chaudhry landed at Lahore Air Base, taxied to the tarmac, parked his Bristol Freighter and walked down the steps. He called the crew chief and informed him of the bird hit – a bird that he had seen too late and did not recognize the type. The crew chief went around the aircraft, came back with a grin on his face and stood to attention in front of the pilot. "Sir I think I recognize the bird type – it is of the type called Sheesham – which when seasoned can be turned into a fair amount of good furniture. The bird is hanging in the right wing of the aircraft along with its branches". Manzoor Ch was devastated. He turned around, faced his crew and said, "Our excellent excuse is not being accepted even by a simple airman – How on earth is Officer Commanding going to accept it."

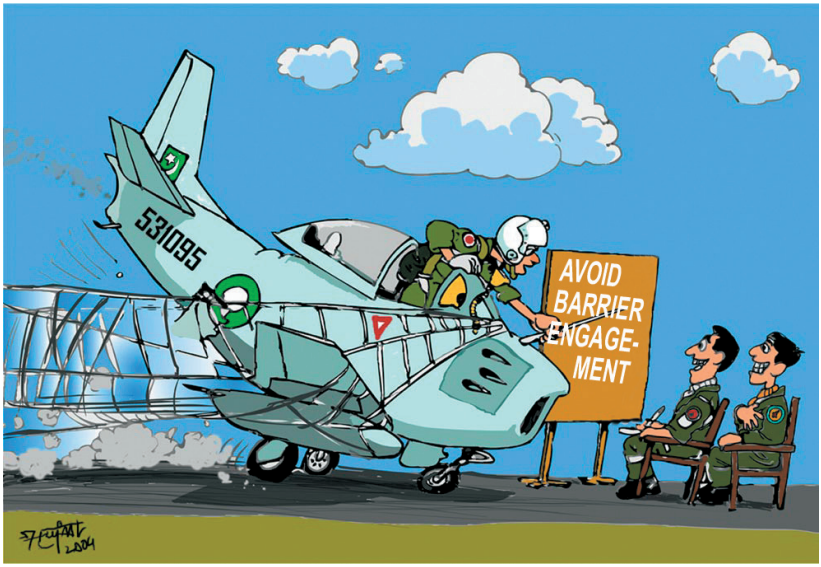
Solemnly he walked down to the Officer Commanding's office, entered, saluted and confessed.

Much later, in 1987, Squadron Leader Arshad Bhatti repeated the above feat with his student Flying Officer Faheem Cheema. After he landed back in his dual seater FT-5 jet trainer, he offered the same excuse to his crew chief that Flight Lieutenant Manzoor Choudhary had offered to his crew chief thirty years ago, blaming the universal bird. Bhatti's crew chief also gave him exactly the same reply, "Yes Sir, the branches of the poor bird are hanging from your right wing along with their leaves".

THE HOTSHOT

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

We were in the final term at PAF Academy Risalpur and flying T-6G aircraft. We were all looking forward to our graduation within six to nine months and moving onto flying F-86 Sabres, the battle proven fighter aircraft. So one fine morning when three F-86s diverted to Risalpur due to their formation leader having engaged the barrier at Peshawar runway, we felt quite happy to meet and host the 'real pilots'. After recovery, one of the pilots, Pilot Officer Bashir, two terms our senior, announced his stinging judgment on all those who had the audacity to engage the barrier. "These hotshots should watch their speed on landing. And what was the point in leaving half the runway behind them. And why couldn't they apply the brakes properly and why couldn't they go around in good time and try another approach" and why and why not. "Could these guys land on the moon? Look at the Americans!" Standing there with his one foot on the chair, arms akimbo, he looked and sounded like Neil Armstrong. We hung onto



his every word, shook our heads in agreement and felt very proud of him.

Peshawar runway became available within two hours. The three F-86s took off for Peshawar. Within ten minutes, two of the F-86s diverted back to Risalpur.

Plt Off Bashir had gone into the barrier

MISSED INTERCEPTION

Group Captain Niaz Ahmed Sufi

Who does not know Z I (Zafar Iqbal) a veteran flier, highest pitched, excited and noisy Wing Commander, later Group Captain and still later an Air Commodore!

After a mission of Practice Interceptions, the mission's details were passed to Air Defence Command (ADC), highlighting the missed interception with reasons. This was done by using abbreviations of various terminologies. If it was a missed interception due to "Personal Error" it was passed as **MIPE**; MI (for missed interception) of PE for "Personal Error". In other case, if the interception was missed due to No pick-up, the reason passed was MIFP (Fadded Prior to Interception)

Once, after a mission, when ZI was the leader who had kept on talking and talking during interception without giving a chance to the ground controller to say one word, the reason was passed as MI ZI.

INTEREST IN THE JOB

Wing Commander Bahr-e-Kamal

I was sitting in my office one fine morning when the long continuous beep on the intercom (typical of the Base Commander) suddenly shattered my peaceful thoughts. "Kamal, what is the progress

on your aircraft which had gone for repairs to Kamra?" The question totally confused me as none of my aircraft had gone anywhere for any repairs. As I told him so, his next sentence was enough to blow my head off. "I think you must be taking "Charas". Go to OC Maintenance Wing immediately and then brief me on what he tells you". Shell-shocked and totally agreeing with the Base Commander's remarks if I did not know the whereabouts of my aircraft, I first went around the flight line and talked to the EO. Assured that I was not a 'charsi', I went to OC Maintenance and narrated the whole episode to him. He replied that the Base Commander was actually mixing it up with another aircraft, belonging to Sargodha which had got damaged while being towed out of the hangar. "Could you then please tell him the actual fact?" I asked. "Come on, cool it, you don't have to be so blunt with senior officers", he replied and did not even allow me to use his phone to talk to the Base Commander.

Finally when I called him from my office, his reply was, "OK OK. But take more interest in your job".

WITH THE ENEMY'S HELP : I

Group Captain Abdul Ghaffar Khan

Towards the end of 71 War, an Indian Air Force two shipper patrol was flying near the Indo-Pak border close to Multan. The two pilots had never entered Pakistan during the war. The No 2 pointed out this serious lapse in their wartime flying record to the leader and coaxed him into making a short foray into the Pakistani territory for the sake of posterity as it would make a gallant story for the grandchildren. However, it turned out to be a different story.

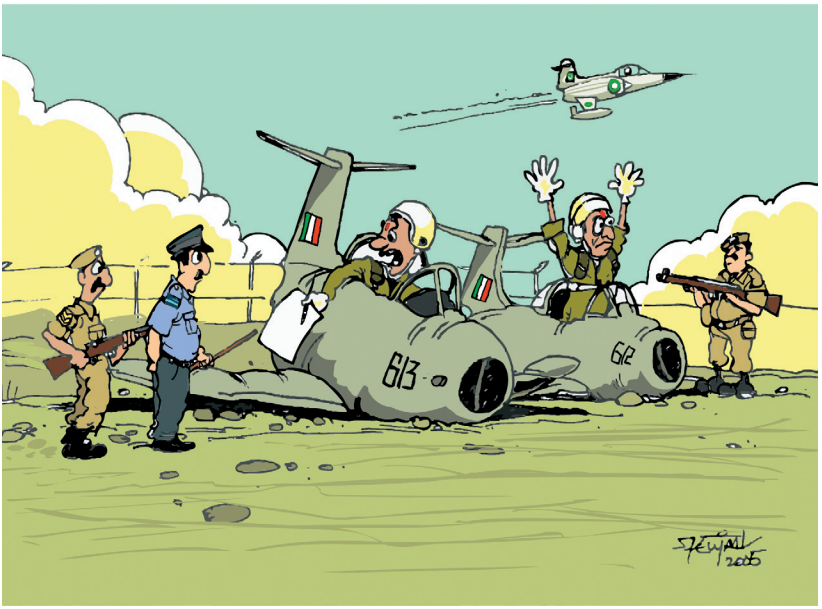
As the two aeroplanes made their unauthorized entry into Pakistan they ran into a Combat Air Patrol of the PAF. The leader was promptly shot. He ejected, was captured and sent to the nearest PAF Base at Multan. While he was being interrogated by Flt Lt Ghaffar, the

Indian Pilot suddenly asked his interrogator if he was from the Admin Branch.

"Yes. I am", said Ghaffar.

"Look partner" said the Indian, I told you that we made an unauthorized foray into Pakistan. When I go back to India, I will certainly have to face an inquiry.

Now since you are a smart admin officer, will you write out a nice clever statement for me to fool my superiors in the flying branch."



The smart leader later escaped from Rawalpindi with two other pilots, took a free ride to Peshawar in a Coca Cola truck and took another free ride to Landi Kotal posing as students with no money. They were caught before they could cross into Afghanistan and were given yet another free ride back to Peshawar; this time in a PAF helicopter.

The grandchildren got their story alright.

WITH THE ENEMY'S HELP : II

Squadron Leader Shoaib Alam

During 1965 C-in-C Air Marshal Asghar Khan had gone to Bangkok when the Indians attacked Pakistan in Rann of Katch at 10 am one morning. Since C-in-C, was not available, there was a panic as to what to do. There was a meeting in AHQ and it was decided that we should review our plans. The Plans Directorate began to burn the midnight oil. Every evening at about 6 pm Air Vice Marshal Akhtar, Air Commodore Rahim Khan and the Director would join us to review our status. A few days later, Air Vice Marshal Akhtar remarked that our progress was sufficient and that we were ready to face any eventuality. However, he observed that he didn't know why the Indians had not struck us so far. Everybody was quiet. Ultimately, Flight Lieutenant Shoaib, the junior most officer present provided the answer.

"Sir the Indians have been waiting for us to update our plans."

FIRST SOLO

Air Commodore S N A Jilani

He was a great and shrewd flying instructor. His name was Squadron Leader S M A Shah. He took me up to clear me for my first 'SOLO' on T-6G. I took off and flew around performing some exercises before rejoining the circuit for landing. The instructor remained quiet, which was most unusual for a person of his reputation. Finally, I heard the instructor's voice on intercom from the rear cockpit. I heaved a sigh of relief from fear of silence but soon started sweating due to nature of his questions. He posed me following questions in a manner that was most unknown for him:

- What is your age?
- Why did you join Air Force for flying?

- What do your parents do?
- What will you do if you are suspended from flying?
- What will you do if you are thrown out of Air Force?
- How many brothers and sisters do you have?
- Do you think you can earn your bread if I throw you out of the Air Force?
- Do you know that you have not learnt flying so far and if I clear you for solo, you will destroy an aircraft and kill yourself?
- What will your family do if you crash and get killed?
- I do not care about your life but do you think I could take a chance on losing an expensive aircraft?
- Do you think Air Force needs you?

He asked me many more questions and passed remarks while I kept answering the best way I could. Finally, he asked me to make the last landing, taxi back to the squadron and to collect my Clearance Form. I concluded that he had failed me in the test and that this would be my last flying mission. With a heavy heart, I landed and started taxiing back to the squadron. Halfway, he ordered me to taxi to the take off point. I obeyed but was almost lifeless.

I could not believe when he told me to stop short of the Take Off Point and said, "Jilani, I have decided to let you kill yourself but, for God's sake, do not damage the aircraft. I will wait here, you take off solo, make only one circuit, land and pick me up from here". With these remarks, he moved out of the rear cockpit and stood on the wing by my side, checking that stick in the rear was stowed and canopy closed. I was so overjoyed that I opened throttle immediately and my instructor almost flew off the wing. He held back on the side rail of my cockpit, pulled the throttle back and shouted, "You dope, do you want to kill me? Is this how you idiots behave with your instructors? You are headless. Dammit let me get clear of the aircraft before you open power".

I could say nothing and went solo. On the way back, I picked him up. On return to the squadron, I tried to thank him but he only stared at me and went away to his office.

Thereafter, I underwent normal flying training and I flew with him a number of times but he always showed that he was not impressed by my flying. I felt proud when he told me on Graduation that he was sending me to the fighters. He later confided in me that since he never wanted me to be over confident, he always kept me under pressure so that I should continue to work as hard as I did during the training.

BRIDGE ON DOWNWIND

Wing Commander Rafique

We were flying Furies in the mid-fifties. It was routine practice to have a medically unfit pilot sitting in the control tower to help any pilot in an abnormal situation. One day, I was detailed to perform this duty. Only one aircraft was expected to arrive after the mission and the controller on duty, an avid bridge player, was giving me a sermon on the casual attitude of pilots. Along the way, he was also lecturing me on the importance of playing bridge. His harangue was interrupted by the sudden radio call of the arriving FURY.

"Paybill 13, downwind three greens."

The controller in the middle of his lecture on bidding, replied,

"Three No Trumps." "Double it," retorted the alert pilot.

FROG IN THE AIR

'Wing Commander Rafique

Flight Lieutenant Randhawa, MM Alam and myself were flying in Mauripur. Randhawa had brought in his T-37 from Risalpur while we were flying in F-86s. Randhawa liked to speak on the radio in

a deep throaty voice and a slow quivering tone. He called Mauripur tower," Mauripur this is Jetson 27, request joining instructions."

Alam at once called the tower, "Mauripur there seems to be a frog in the circuit."

A QUICK CATCALL

Air Commodore Syed Sajjad Haider

Pakistan Air Force always puts up a big show on its Pakistan's Republic Day parade. Chief of the Air Staff leads the fly past in the latest fighter plane in the inventory and almost all types of PAF aeroplanes participate in the display. Years earlier all the aircraft would be on the same radio channel and one can imagine the kind of chatter that might be heard with over 15 guys using one frequency. Catcalls were galore; mischief on the R/T name of the game. Pilots would simply effect a change in the voice and call out a colleagues nickname or just say something funny. The top brass was always unhappy, looking to recognize some voice and chastise the owner.

This 23rd March again, over 150 pilots were in the air looking to have fun. The large number also included Flight Lieutenant Nazar Hayat Khan, a known stammerer and not given to too much frolic on R/T. As the guys took to enjoying themselves catcalling, Nazar stayed to himself. Slowly and surely he got infected however and by the time everyone was through Nazar decided to give a quick catcall himself and be counted among the boys. The face of one of his friends flashed into his mind. He pressed the mike button and off he went,

"Go Go Go ril ril"

"Shut up, Nazar" the Chief of Air Staff voice came on the R/T harsh like a lash, "and see your Base Commander after landing. He'll tell you what a Gorilla can do".

The catcall died in Nazar's throat.

PREPARING TO MEET THE HOURIS

Air Commodore Syed Sajjad Haider

On the very first day of the 65 War, as we landed back from our strike against the Indian armour close to Lahore at 10 am.I got the message to launch an airfield strike at Pathankot. I selected eight pilots to participate in the raid - experienced as well as raw hands. I was selecting the pilots with a heavy heart as I fully expected that most of us may not return. Being only human I didn't want the guys I liked a lot to be part of the strike - lest they may not come back - yet I wanted the best of the lot. After selecting my strike party I told them that there would be no briefing, and that they should hit the sack. For preparation of the maps, I requested late Squadron Ldr Iqbal of No 24 Squadron to ask his navigations to help out; he had eight good maps and log cards delivered to us before departure. Meanwhile, I asked one of my guys to get a few bottles of my favourite Eue de Cologne 7 x 11, and mix these in a bucket of ice cold water. Then we switched off the lights of the room we were in and tried to sleep. I am not sure about others but I did sleep for an hour or so. Then everyone got up and put on the anti-G suits and the flying boots and we got together for a quick briefing, 8 x F-88s for the strike and 2 x F-86 to provide top cover against any Indians who may try to throw a spanner in our business.

Briefing over, we began to troop out to the waiting Sabers. Suddenly this guy with the "Eu De Cologne in the ice cold water" project came running and asked me what did I want to do with that nice smelling water.

Aah, I had almost forgotten. I called all the pilots and said, "Look, today is the day we have been preparing for all our lives - to go to war. Some of us will come back to this squadron and go back to our earthly wives while the others would go to the heaven - and their heavenly

wives - the 'houries'. Now when you go to meet the 'hourie'. I don't want you to meet them with all the stink of your sweating coveralls. I want you smelling good and nice - after all you belong to No 19 Squadron. So they all took the white towels one by one and perfumed their hands, faces and necks – in anticipation.

In the event the cologne was wasted - they all came back - Houries still waiting - in anticipation.

While writing this article, I called Director of Education to check the exact English word for Hoor. He replied that I should better call Director of Motivation and Religious affairs as he was the one most likely to have booked some Hoors for the purpose of raising Air Crews' morale.

FOLLOW RAIL

Air Vice Marshal Iqbal Haider

Flight Lieutenant Iqbal Haider (later Air Vice Marshal) an instructor at the PAF Academy was flying a navigation cross-country in his T-37, when Cherat Control asked him to talk to two Army Mushshaks that seemed to have encountered some strange problem while going to Lahore, something to do with a tunnel. Iqbal Haider changed his frequency, spoke to the pilots and got back to Cherat control:

"Well, these two Mushshaks have taken off from Dhamial, Rawalpindi. They are trying to go to Lahore by following the Pindi—Lahore railway line. Visibility is poor and cloud base low. Close to Rawat the railway line entered a tunnel and the tunnel has turned.

Now they can't find the railway line".

BOMB BURST

Air Marshal Qaiser Hussain

During the 1974 Islamic Summit, the Libyan Leader Colonel Ghaddafi extended his visit to Pakistan by two days and the PAF was asked to arrange a firepower demonstration in his honour. There was no time to prepare, plan and rehearse the 'demo', and therefore many a lapse was expected to take place.
In one of these, I was involved.

We brought in our Mirages from Rafiqui, flew one rehearsal and were on with 'LIVE' ammo the next day. Individual squadrons carried out the rehearsal by themselves but on the D-Day it had to be 'ONE' show and every formation had to be on dot. My formation of 04 Mirages was to demonstrate dive-bombing with the new "RPK bomb racks" carrying 4 x 500 Ib bombs under each wing. To follow us would be a formation of 4 x F-86s for a napalm attack around the same target area. On the actual day, we arrived on the target a few seconds late and the F-86s ran in a few seconds too early. So as the Mirages pulled out of the attack after releasing their bombs, the F-86s came in with napalms flying at 50 feet - the total difference in our timing being less than 45 seconds. As they arrived over the target, the F¬-86 leader found the bombs dropped by us exploding all over the place. He yelled for an immediate pull up and the F-86s had to execute an immediate unplanned 'Bomb Burst' kind of manoeuvre. The crowds went ecstatic - clapped and clapped, heaping praises on the excellent pull up and the agility demonstrated by the F-86 pilots.

In the air, however, the scene was somewhat different.

I had used 'the RPK' rack for the first time and had not pressed the release pipper long enough to release all the eight bombs. Only five had gone down to the mother earth and three bombs were still under my wings. When I joined up in our formation, the leader told me to proceed to Nowshera range and release my bombs over there.

As I headed to Nowshera, I do remember hearing some other formation also heading towards the same range but was too absorbed

in planning my own flight path to notice exactly what else was going on. I went over the range and dropped my bombs from 4000 feet in the open area. At once there was this tremendous yelling, and shouting, on the R/T with many unprintable adjectives apparently from somebody below me who had barely missed my bombs and had to execute a bomb burst manoeuvre which nobody saw and clapped at. I sealed my mouth, ran like the devil himself and quietly came back and landed at Peshawar.

Almost immediately, I was hauled up before my OC Flying Wing with two reserve F-86s pilots giving close chase.

Thank God, they could kill with looks alone - their napalms they had expended at Nowshera range.

THE NEW CODE

Air Commodore Ayaz Quddusi

We were providing EW support to the PAF air defence effort against the Russian incursion from Afghanistan. Airborne in our electronic warfare aircraft we picked a MIG-25 signature and relayed it to the intercepting aircraft in code.

"Eagle Lead one hostile aircraft "Sierra" at 40,000 feet
11 o'clock to you 60 miles".
"What is "Sierra" queried the Eagle Lead.

We were in a fix. "Sierra" was a code that he should have known. The captain ultimately decided to help out.

"Sierra is MIG-25"
"Roger"

"And since this code has been compromised," transmitted my captain, "henceforth the code for MIG-25 will be Quebec".

MURPHY STRIKES AGAIN

Air vice Marshal Abdul Razzaq

A Fury returning to Miranshah from a mission lowered his undercarriage for landing and found no response. When all efforts to lower the gears failed, it was decided to divert the Fury to Peshawar which was the major maintenance Base. As the Fury arrived on the final approach, the pilot was surprised to find the runway already occupied.

Another Fury was on the runway - on its belly

SECRECY DURING WAR

Squadron Leader Shahid

Everything is kept secret during the wars and as far as possible codes are used but what do you do if no code is available to deal with a particular problem.

Flying Officer llyas Baig Mirza later Air Commodore, took off as No 2 in a four-ship F-86 formation. His gears did not go up and to keep this very vital info secret, he proceeded as follows:¬

"Leader this is No 2."

"Go ahead."

"Leader, something which is supposed to go up is not going up."

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Squadron Leader Shoaib Alam Khan

It was not unusual for the VIPs to go for Shikar on weekends. One weekend in 1960 the Foreign Minister Mr Bhutto and C-in-C Air Marshal Asghar Khan decided to go partridge shooting to Sukkur. We got airborne in the Bristol Freighter and arrived at Sukkur before first

light, but there was a fog and we were unable to land. Air Marshal Asghar Khan came into the cockpit and asked us to try Jacobabad. On arrival at Jacobabad, we found that one half of the runway was covered with fog while the other half was clear. Flight Lieutenant Fatmi approached from the clear side, landed but went into the fog just before he could stop the aircraft. After we stopped the aircraft and got out, the Foreign Minister went off to arrange the transport. Now Air Marshal Asghar Khan summoned us and began to give us a dressing down for landing in half fog. When he was half way through and we began to feel foggy, the minister came back, joined us and said, "Good landing and terrific show - boys".

IN A HURRY TO LAND

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

I was flying my Base Commander from Peshawar to Chaklala and back in the Aero Commander 680 E one day, and he seemed to be in an awful lot of hurry. He mentioned this fact many times but it never occurred to me to ask him the reason. After landing at Chaklala, he again reminded me that I should wait for him at the aircraft as he was in a hurry. When he came to the aircraft, he literally ran in to sit in the co-pilot's seat and even tried to start the engines without properly positioning the switches. He was definitely in a great hurry; anyone could see that but nobody dared ask him the reason.

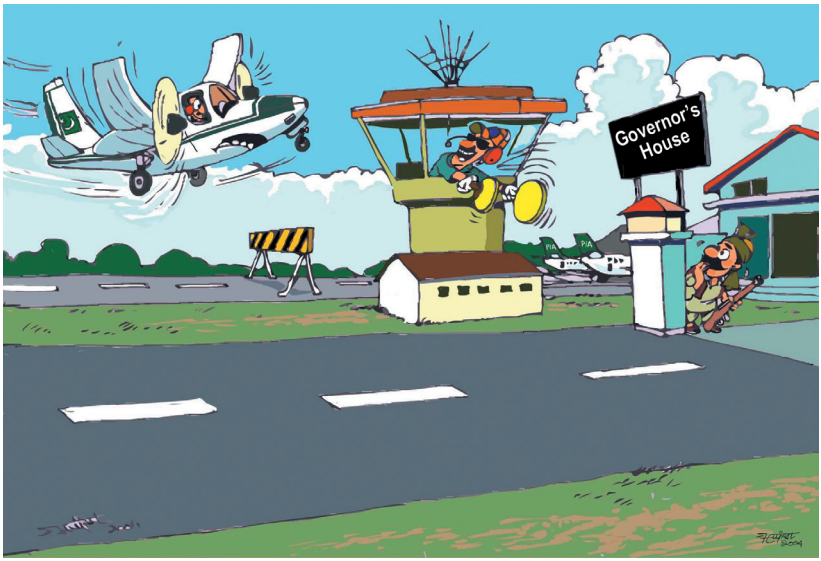
We belted our way home as fast as the aircraft engines would permit. As soon as we reached 10 miles short of Peshawar, I changed the frequency and requested the control tower for joining instructions.

"Call downwind runway 35 altimeter 2998 inches", came the reply. Immediately, the Base Commander took over control of the radio.

"Peshawar, you don't know I'm in a tremendous hurry."

"Sir, Call direct finals for runway 35". This would save us about 10 seconds perhaps from our direction of approach and it was the best the tower could offer.
"No you don't understand", again urged the Base Cdr, "I am in a great hurry."
"I've to go to Governor's House for lunch"

"Call Direct Governor's House" replied the compliant tower.



WHICH ANTENNA

Air Commodore Shadab

A student pilot is asked about the nomenclature of the IFF antenna on the Mirage aircraft. The student doesn't know the answer and is quietly prompted by guy sitting behind him.

"Sir, Fish Antenna," goes the relieved student.
"Yes, Dish Antenna, Good. Sit down" says a satisfied instructor.

KEEN FLYER

Air Vice Marshal Abdul Razzaq

I was an instructor in 25 Squadron flying F-6 fighters in the days when dual seater F-6s had not yet arrived. One day, I took a student on my wing for general flying. He was a very keen flyer and always wanted to be in the air. After climbing to altitude we began to perform aerobatics. As we came out of a loop he called me on R/T.

"Leader I've overstressed. My 'G' meter is reading eight G's". Immediately, I called off the mission and began to head back to the base. Not happy with the termination of the mission, the keen flyer sent another call down the R/T.

"Leader this is No 2. I now recollect that the 'G' meter was already indicating three G's on the ground. Can we continue the mission".

Back on ground, the keen flyer had to be taken back to the basics. Eight G's is eight G's. G meter reads the maximum stress inflicted upon the aircraft by a pilot. Aircraft then had to be put through aircraft basic maintenance checks.

LOST BEARING

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

A Bristol Freighter flying from Pakistan to England made a navigational error and landed in France. The AHQ asked the captain to explain this through a signal :

"Reference your landing in France instead of UK. Give reasons".
"Lost our bearing," went the reply.

"Quickly send the part number so that we can dispatch the replacement of the bearing". Telexed back a concerned AHQ.

BARRIER ENGAGEMENT

Flight Lieutenant Arsalan

It was one of very cold days in Quetta. One of the two F-6 Squadrons was on ADA. As luck would have it, there was a scramble at dawn.

It was a practice scramble and exercise went satisfactorily. On recovery, however, the leader announced an emergency. Nobody was available to be in mobile as working hours start late in winters. The ATCO took standard steps and asked the crash tender to follow the emergency aircraft. The crash driver was too enthusiastic and did his best to follow the aircraft as close as possible. The pilot managed to stop the aircraft just short of the barrier, but the crash driver was unable to stop his crash tender and engaged the barrier.

And thus came the first barrier engagement of the PAF by a crash tender.

SUIT YOURSELF

Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat

Squadron Leader Ejaz Wyne and Flight Lieutenant Dogar took off from Rafiqui for a live air to ground firing mission during an armament competition. Ejaz Wyne was a very exuberant pilot. He led from the front and was vocal in whatever he did. Soon after they pulled out of their last attack, he calculated that since they must have hit the targets out of the ground, they would have secured 100% points – in this case 800 per kill totalling 1600 points. I was in the mobile when Wyne called:

"Rafiqui, this is Falcon Bravos joining with 1600 points."
Then, "Lead this is No 2. Change over to manual frequency please."

I also switched to manual to be party to their secret talk. No 2 was in request mode to his leader, "Sir goliyan to Sab dayen bayen theen – Kayoon Bay Izzat Karwaian Gay" (All the bullets were off target. Why you want us to be disgraced).

Then reporting Pir Mahal the leader called, "Rafiqui Falcon Bravos, Pir Mahal with 800 points."

Again "Lead, No 2. Go back to manual for one". I also joined.
No 2 was pleading, "Sir no way we are going to get even 800 points".
Leader: "Doesn't matter. One must create good impression."
No 2: "Why mention the score at all."
Leader: "Okay back to channel 2."

The leader called, "Rafiqui this is Falcon leader, turning initials finally with 400 points".

On landing No 2's worst fears were confirmed.

Their score was zero.

GENERAL ON BOARD

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

Air Commodore Zafar Chaudhary (later Chief of the Air staff) and I, (also later Chief of the Air Staff) were ferrying two Mirages from France where first stop had to be Brindisi, Italy. Short of Brindisi, we were told that the airport was closed due to weather and we were asked to divert to GIOIA DEL COLLE. The main runway of the base was under repairs and there was only a Lieutenant Colonel available there as incharge of the care and maintenance party. Obviously intimated about the arrival of a Pakistani Brigadier General, he was present on the tarmac with his retinue and the star car. Air Commodore Zafar Chaudhary taxied in and parked, opened the canopy and removed his helmet to display his jet black hair. The ladder was connected and everybody moved towards his aircraft to receive him. Then I taxied in, parked my Mirage, opened the canopy and removed my helmet to display my grey hair. When Air Commodore Zafar Chaudhary alighted from the aircraft with his flock of jet black hair, and turned to receive the salute, there wasn't a soul in sight.

They were all crowded around my aircraft to receive the 'General'.

When we landed at Turkey, a three star general came and took away Zafar Chaudhary in his car, who had been his colleague in CENTO. I was left all by myself doing the paper work. Then suddenly, this one star car arrived, put me aboard and took off. I received a large number of 'present arms' before I could stop the driver and have the star plate covered. He tried to explain to the "young Air Commodore with grey hair" that it was his due and the star must stay 'OPEN' but I persisted. He got down and covered the star, though, with very unhappy look on his face.

CHIEF, ON LINE

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

As PSO, I briefed all and sundry in the house to use my telephones sparingly and definitely leave the 'Green phone alone because the Chief might call anytime. One day my niece came running and said:

"Uncle, uncle it is the green phone. Chief is on the line".
"Yes Sir, "I said, picking up the phone quickly.

Chief Tech Azmat from the exchange was on the line, checking serviceability of telephone.

NEW CALL SIGN

Air Commodore Abdul Ghaffar

Trainee pilot in F-86 performing poorly gets a call from his IP:

"No 2, you are no more Tiger 2. You are Goofy 2".
"Yes Sir."
In a while Trainee calls.
"Goofy leader, Goofy 2. R/T check".

ACTIVE CONTROLLING

Air Marshal Mirza Zafar

Ground Party to Mianwali Tower on Motorola : "Tower this is ground towing party requesting permission to cross the runway at link Alpha."

Lady Controller (who was busy phoning her friend at AHQ) :

"Aaah, ground party go ahead"
Ground Party : "Thank you very much, Tower".

Switches off the Motorola and crosses the runway.

THE RENEGADE I

Air Chief Marshal Zulfiqar Ali Khan

In the early fifties, a runaway from law, took refuge with a Malik in the uncontrolled area close to Miran Shah. The Political Agent tried through all means at his disposal to convince the 'Malik' to hand over the outlaw to the government but the Malik continued to refuse. Ultimately, the PA got fed up and requested the Air Force to put the fear of God into the Malik's heart. The Malik was then given the ultimatum that he should hand over the 'renegade' by 10:00 am or else his village would be reduced to rubble. As usual he refused.

At 10:15, I started up with a formation of four furies. I briefed my pilots that we would not hit the village but demonstrate our firepower outside the inhabited area. As we flew over the village at 10:30, I could see that the villagers were all standing way out of the village. Most of them clapped when we crossed overhead. I chose the big tree just outside the village as the target and my formation proceeded to blow it out of the ground. As rocket after rocket hit the tree, its dry branches catching fire, it became a burning torch.

A ten minute firepower show was sufficient for Malik's guts to fail. By twelve o' clock he was in the office of the Political Agent:

"Sir, your aeroplanes are absolutely unstoppable, they rained fire from the sky. It was like the doomsday. They have bombed and burnt the whole village. Here's your criminal, the useless man but I need five thousand rupees to rebuild my village. Kindly arrange for money immediately, preferably before lunch".

"A miserable village like yours" said the Political Agent, "Can be built anew in two thousand rupees. Still the aeroplanes did not destroy anything but an old tree. No money is warranted".

"It was the most revered tree in the village, specially planted by my great grandfather. Four thousand rupees".

The deal was struck at five hundred rupees.

After lunch the "Malik" wanted to meet the "angles of fire". He clasped my right hand in both of his paws and said:

"Thank you for helping me getting rid of that crook. And thank you for five hundred rupees. Now I can get myself a new bride".
His eyes were dancing with joy.

THE RENEGADE II

Air Chief Marshal Zulfiqar Ali Khan

When I was Chief of the Air Staff, the Peshawar Corps Commander rang me up one day and said that one of his engineering battalions had been surrounded by the tribals and the jawans were being butchered. He requested for immediate air action to save the troops. I called Group Captain Shabbir H Syed (later VCAS) to send in an F-86 formation led by a very senior pilot. I also advised him not to fire on the people but away from them. "The show of force alone should achieve the desired results".

Group Captain Shabbir led the two-shipper himself. He made a few straffing runs well away from the tribals and within minutes, the siege was over. The then GOC Major General Fazl-e-Haq told me later on, that certain land had been acquired from the tribals for the construction of a road. The construction, however, was started without making payment to the concerned people due to which the tribals surrounded the engineers troops. Firing on the civilians would not have solved the problem. My earlier experience with the 'Malik' as a Squadron Leader came in handy as Air Chief Marshal.

I'M SORRY

Anonymous

One day, I took off on GF mission with my instructor pilot in T-37 aircraft. Soon after level off, my instructor asked me to perform steep turns. I performed as usual but my Instructor Pilot said, "You seem to be unfit today. You are not performing well." Student pilot, obviously can hardly defend himself. Simple answer, "Yes Sir" was rattled out. Then I was asked to perform the loop. "Today you are not fit – You are unable to perform". Roll of the top was termed as absolutely pathetic. Obviously, I was going to waste the mission. "Let's recover immediately", so he took over the controls and went in for a quick straight landing. He cleared the runway, stopped on taxi track, and switched off the engine on his side and I watched him, in horror, as he ran out to the fields. He returned after a while and said, "This is between you and me – and I'm sorry."

Sir, it is no more between you and me. And I'm sorry too.

BEEP BEEP

Wg Cdr Zafar Iqbal

Mirage aircraft has a beeper facility next to the gear lever. When pressed, after the gears have been lowered and locked down in the 'safe' position, it helps transmit a beep-beep aural signal. As a matter of procedure, whenever a pilot is on Base leg to landing, he gives a call – "Tower, so and so Base, gears checked" – then presses the beeper. The pilot sitting in the mobile (and anyone else who's tuned in) hears the 'Beep Beep', knows that gears of this aircraft are safe and heaves a big sigh of relief. In case, the pilot omits to send in the 'Beep Beep' – the mobile officer must "Request Beeper".

Young Flying Officer Masood Akhtar, newly posted to an F-6 squadron in Sargodha, was on the mobile duty and the only aircraft in the air was a Mirage piloted by the Base Commander (Air Commodore Saddruddin) who was intent upon polishing his landings. He flew the circuit, came in to land, and called "Tiger one zero base gears checked" but did not press the beeper. Masood was in a dilemma. If he called for the Beeper the Base Commander may not like it – if he didn't call for the Beeper the Base Cdr may not like it at all. Damned if you do and damned if you don't. He decided to err on the side of the safety.

"Tiger one zero – mobile – request beeper."
Nothing.
Next approach again –
"Tower, Tiger one zero base gears checked" - No Beep Beep.
"Tiger one zero, mobile, request beeper."
Again Nothing.

After the third approach when the 'Beep Beep' still did not come in response to his request, the mobile officer decided enough was enough. After all, he was a Fighter Jock too - He also had some self-respect. So in the most firm voice that a Flying Officer can muster, he demanded.

"Tiger one zero, this is mobile – "request beeper."

Base Commander was deeply moved.

"Beep Beep" Came the Base Commander's personal voice over the radio --- Then,

"Are you satisfied now".

My Mother
was not an
Englishman

GOOD ENGLISH

Group Captain Abdul Ghaffar Khan

In early seventies, Wg Cdr Altaf H Butt was OC Ground Combateer Wing at Sargodha. Flt Lt Muhammad Tufail Bajwa was his adjutant. One day the OC received a letter from AHQ asking him to write a paper on ground defence concepts. He promptly marked the letter to his adjutant with the order to put up a draft. Tufail Bajwa had been specifically commissioned into the PAF for promotion of Sports, a job that he was doing very well. He was the Pakistan champion of shot put and captain of the National Kabbadi team; writing drafts in English language was not his cup of tea.

Tufail improvised, he had a brother by the name of G R Bajwa, who taught chemistry at PAF College Sargodha. Through him, he procured the services of an English professor. Bajwa explained the plan to the Professor in Punjabi, the Professor translated it into English, a retired Flt Lt Subhan Shah organized the paper according to the service writing and in four days Tufail Bajwa laid the draft on his superior officer's table.

Altaf looked at the draft, tried to decipher it, then called Tufail Bajwa in:

"You know I am allergic to bad English," he snarled, tore the draft and lodged it into the wastepaper basket. "Put up another draft".

"I have done more than my bit", retorted Bajwa, and explained all his efforts. Now you write the new draft.

The bell was rung again. The peon pulled out the draft from the basket, brought in a scotch tape and put both the ingredients on the Officer's Commanding table.

The concepts of ground defence were submitted to the AHQ the very next day.

LETTER FROM THE ORDERLY ROOM TO GARRISON ENGINEER'S OFFICE

Squadron Leader Naseem

It is hereby intimated that urinal in the toilet of Officer Commanding No 18 Squadron has gone U/S (Unserviceable) **through fear, wear and tear**. It is requested that it may be replaced with a serviceable one.

TONITE

Wing Commander Rafique

A senior cadet awarding two extra drills to a junior cadet at PAF Academy Risalpur, "You'll carry out two extra parades –

one today tonight and one tomorrow tonight."

A PERFECT CALL

Air Commodore Javaid Sabir

A C-130 was proceeding to Dover AFB USA. The crew comprised two under training captains with a senior supervisor on board. The two under training captains spoke English in Punjabi style. When they tried to call Dover ATC in their own accent, the controller responded with "Please say again" a few times. Observing this poor communication, the senior supervisor felt extremely annoyed and irritated. He scolded the captains for "Poor R/T" and proceeded to demonstrate an "Ideal R/T call". He put on an American accent and transmitted a perfect call. The Dover ATC controller responded rather warily

"Can't anyone in your aircraft speak English"?

The senior supervisor was quiet for the rest of the trip and was never heard on R/T in that mission!

AIR TRAFFIC

Air Cdre Aslam Bazmi

A young air traffic controller (ATCO), was all eyes and ears as his Base Commander was flying in the circuit. As the aircraft turned on finals to land, a calf appeared on the runway from the opposite direction (perhaps on an FOD parade). Quick as a wit the controller came on R/T:

"Sir, you are cleared to land. Watch out for the son of a cow backtracking on the runway."

(The controller was rewarded with an intensive course in the English language).

NOT YET FORTY

Air Cdre Aslam Bazmi

Not content with the performance of his provost department, the new Air Officer Commanding (AOC) a great martinet in his own right himself began random checks of the breaches of the speed limit (40 KM per hour) within the academy premises. On a good day, a 35-year old officer drove past the AOC at a speed well over 50. After a brief hot chase, the AOC nabbed him and gently spoke:

"Son, you are well over 40. Are you preparing these days to participate in a car rally"?
"No Sir, I am not yet 40 nor I am interested in any kind of rally", came back naive reply.
"But I can bet my life that you just can't be below 40", snarled the two-star tiger.

"But Sir, here is my service identity card", spluttered the officer, extending the identity card for the AOC's personal scrutiny. "You can yourself confirm my age from my date of birth. "

"Well done! You are truly great", the AOC exclaimed with a hearty laugh, and graciously let his precious prey go off the hook.

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Air Commodore Javed Sabir

An officer eulogizing a brother officer on his retirement, "The officer has always held up the good traditions of the PAF".

The response acknowledging the benevolence of PAF, "The service has been very kind to me and on many an occasion has overseen many of my mistakes".

A senior officer advising junior officers, "You must take advantage of any opportunities that come in your way."

DCAS (Engg) had been tasked to give a briefing on "Re-structuring of Engineering Branch". The progress slide flashed in the Air Board Meeting reads, "DCAS (Engg) is to give a briefing on 'Restricting the Engineering Branch'.

Flight Lieutenant Azeem delivering a motivation lecture to young cadets, "You must be patriotic. You may have to die for the country. And you better die yourself or I'll die you".

"Hurry up, Hurry up, let's pull the photograph. We're getting late."

Flight Lieutenant Ashraf checking the cadets on guard duty. approaches a cadet, almost recognizing him:
"Are you", then suddenly not sure of himself; "Are you who?"

The reply, "Sir I am – He".

Scheduling Officer to a cadet who has been unfit for many days: "Mr, when are you getting fitness?"

Cadet, "Sir, I am going to the doctor daily, but he is not fitting me".

Senior Cadet, "Habib, how did you recover from backache?"

Cadet Habib, "Sir, I stopped sleeping on the Mistress."(Mattress).

Cadet covering Hi-speed abort in the morning brief:

Check Throttle	Idle
Lower	Nose
Optimum	Brakes
Give call for ABORTION	

BRIEF

Air Commodore Shadab

The Flight Commander was briefing us about the weather that was building up towards the south and west of the airfield:
"Be very careful specially towards the west. I think these clouds will definitely give some PARTICIPATION".

OPPOSITE

Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat

When the first Pakistani contingent went to Algeria to conduct flying training at their Academy, we found that the students were not very good in speaking English but they did manage to express themselves somehow.

One day we learnt that a 'girl' pilot had made a belly landing on a T-34. When she came back to the crew room everybody asked her what had happened. She said:

"You see, today I was opposite of intelligent and did opposite of lowering gears".

GROUNDED

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

A lady of western origin married Pakistani pilot. She was obviously not well versed with technical terms of the PAF which were routinely used and known to the families of the PAF officers. One day she learnt that the pilot living next door has been "grounded". She translated the word into her native language and decided to discharge her neighbourly duties immediately. She went next door and rang the bell, wearing a look of sorrow on her face. It was none but the "Mrs Grounded" who opened the door and welcomed her into the drawing room with a big smile on her face. A horrified visitor began cautiously. *"I'm very sorry to hear that your husband has been grounded. He was such a nice person".*

"Nice person you say. He was absolutely wretched. I could hardly see him. He was always with his damn Mig. You would think he was married to the Mig and not to me".

"Oh I'm sorry. I didn't know he was unfaithful to you. But now that his is grounded, I think you should forgive him".

Right then the 'grounded' walked in. The 'lady' jumped as if she had seen a ghost.

"Weren't you grounded" she managed in a weak voice.

"Yes, but for a week only."

"You mean you – but how can you die only for a week"

"Mam, in PAF you can."

"Well then if you are alive – tell me how dare you go around with this wretched Mig woman and ignore your lovely wife".

PIMPLING OVER THE CIRCLE HILL

Anonymous

A very senior instructor had one gear unsafe indication while flying a T-37 in Risalpur. He was asked to wait while all other aircraft were being recovered. He proceeded to circle around the **'pimple hill'** and began to utilize his time in going over the steps of the emergency procedure. The tower called him many times to check his position. He was rather busy and did not hear the tower clearly.

Then he called the tower, "Risalpur, Tell me when you are ready to receive me, ***meanwhile I'm pimpling over the circle hill.***"

EAT MORE

Air Commodore Shadab

We were enjoying a good breakfast including delicious French toast at ADA hut when the OC Flying Wing walked in:

"Sir, please join us in breakfast" requested the section leader.

"Thank you sunny", replied the OC Flying.
Then putting his hand on his stomach continued.
"I'm already quite fed up".

MISAPPROPRIATING FUNDS

Air Vice Marshal Arshad Rashid Sethi

"Sir I request your kind permission to misappropriate some funds."

As Base Commander Samungli at Quetta, when my Satellite Commander at Jacobabad called me early one morning with this request, I literally went through the roof.

"What do you wish to do?" I managed with a very dry throat.
"Misappropriate some funds sir, about two lacs". "Really,
I could do it at my own with the help of the Garrison Engineer – but you know I involve you in everything"
"Involve me in everything" I could see a Court of Inquiry looming in front of my eyes.
"Sir, that's what you ordered yourselves. To keep you involved in everything". See a Court Martial. How would I defend myself against this?
"And why do you propose to misappropriate these funds" I began to prepare my defence.

"Sir, you remember the maintenance funds granted for the repair of Taxiways and the pens. We got a good contractor who saved us this money and I was hoping to use the remainder to re-do all the toilet facilities etc for the pilots, ADA huts. I'm sure you'll agree"
"Agree – I – ADA huts. I thought you said 'misappropriate' Isn't it?" I exhaled finally with the relief of understanding – the scenes of Court Martial disappearing from my vision.
"Yes Sir."
"In that case, I recommended that you re-appropriate the funds."
Why re-appropriate – why not misappropriate?

"Never mind. Go ahead and misappropriate".
I said with a chuckle, my throat no more dry.

WHEN IN PENSIVE MOOD

Anonymous

Project File : 1971

I was working as officer in-charge of a project at a supply depot. One day, I received a call from my Officer Commanding, asking me to arrange for some volunteers with O –ve blood group for blood donation. I, myself having the required group, readily volunteered. After a week or so when I entered my office, I saw a box of sweets lying on my table with a note: -

"Sir, I cannot give revenge for what you did for my wife. God has blessed me with a son, so I am leaving a box of sweets for you. Thanks"

Maintenance Depot File: 1972

It was not long ago that I had taken over as officer in-charge of supply flight of a maintenance depot. One day, I received a call from Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Commander, asking for local

purchase of an imported cementing solution, used in sealing of polythene bags for packing aircraft engines. I enquired from my staff, who informed me that previously the particular imported stuff was available for Rs 20 but, due to shortage, its price had soared up to Rs 60 in black market. The shopkeepers were also not willing to issue the actual bill or invoice. My staff suggested a Pakistani product 'Samad bond' as a cheaper alternative. I conveyed this information to the Squadron Commander, which he scornfully dismissed and insisted, on the purchases of the imported item. After a few hours, I received another call from him and the following conversation ensued:

"Why did you lie to me?" (Tone showed anger). You said the item is not available. It is available in plenty. Purchase it immediately".

"Right sir, at what price is it available and where?"

"It is available for rupees sixty…"

"But sir, that is available only in black (market)". I interrupted.

The boss decreed, "Don't worry about the colour. Get the item"

BUFFET

Squadron Leader Ehsan

The menu for the squadron party had been decided – the venue finalized. Seating arrangements were being discussed –the senior officer in the chair:

A Flying Officer said, "Sir, we will have a buffet."

"No bloody buffet shuffet," interjected Squadron Leader Ashfaq Akhrotia, "Everybody will eat standing."

Operational Solutions

THE PERFECT SOLUTION

Wing Commander Ahmer

A Squadron Commander was notorious for not granting leave to his officers. Ultimately, the matter was reported to the Base Commander who advised him strongly not to stop anybody's leave.

The Squadron Commander went to the crew room and asked his pilots as to who all wanted to proceed on leave. Nobody spoke…. for a long time….. Then a Flying Officer got up and said,

"Sir actually, we all want to go on leave. But if we do that, the Squadron will close. However, if you go on 10 days leave, the squadron will not close and we'll all feel to be on leave as well."

RECRUITMENT STANDARDS

Air Vice Marshal A Masood Khan

One night during the 1965 War, the Ops Room at a Base was buzzing as usual with people going about their assigned work. Rather late at night, the Base Commander walked in looking somewhat shaken and upset. Noticing this, a senior officer on duty, who was well-known in the Air Force for his jokes of all types, asked the Base Cdr if anything was wrong.

Base Cdr: When I was coming to the Base, the sentry at the guard post challenged me. And even though I stopped and gave him the password, this bloody chap let go a burst of Sten Gun (SMG of World War II vintage) at me. I was just lucky that he missed.

Senior Off: Sir, this is very serious. The person must be court-martialled.

Base Cdr: No, No. That is not necessary. The sentry was a very young fellow and he seemed to have pressed the trigger out of sheer nervousness.

Senior Off: No sir, I still maintain that he must be court-martialled.

We cannot afford to have a person like him in the service.

Base Cdr: Now, I understand your concern, but this is wartime and we should be more considerate and understanding.

Senior Off: Sir, believe me, the person is totally useless. He is such a bad shot that he even missed ***YOU*** at such a close range.

CAMOUFLAGE!

Air Commodore Tayyab N Akhtar

Time : December, 1971
Place : FOB Mianwali

We were deployed here from Sargodha and operating from the Air Defence Alert (ADA) complex. Mianwali was a new FOB and most operational works were in the last stages of completion when the war broke out. The contractor had, for some unknown reason, built a water reservoir right in between the crew transport disembarkation point and the ADA hut. This reservoir or pond had a one-foot high parapet wall that had to be used as the walkway by the pilots to transit to the ADA hut.

One night, the Satellite Commander Group Captain (later Air Vice Marshal) Dutta visited the ADA hut with OC Flying and happened to see the moon shining in the pond. He immediately ordered the pond to be camouflaged. The MES quickly covered the pond with tarpaulin. Early the next day, before first light, the F-6 pilots came on watch. As usual, the driver parked the aircrew transport right next to the pond. Out stepped Squadron Leader Nazar Hayat. Being a little heavy, he staggered, lost his balance on the parapet and stepped onto the tarpaulin, believing it to be terra firma. Lo and behold! There was a big splash as Nazar fell into the freezing cold water and disappeared into the pond in his flying suit. In the prevailing darkness, he got

disoriented, waded around for a while and got out at the other end of the pond. The time spent in there was enough for him to catch cold, or for the cold to catch him.

And what happened to the camouflage of the pond? The tarpaulin was removed, water drained and the pond floor plastered.

It took one big, later sick, F-6 pilot to bring home the correct camouflage technique to the authorities!

CG IN THE CENTRE

Flt Lt Manzoor Ch

The transport aircraft in the PAF always support a loadmaster in their crew. One of the duties of the loadmaster is to prepare a trim sheet after the aircraft has been loaded. The trim sheet shows exactly where the baggage or other load has been placed in the cabin. After calculating the moments of force, the loadmaster graphically displays the present aircraft centre of gravity (CG) with reference to the aircraft nose. The CG must be within a given range for a smooth flight. An out-of limits CG aircraft could crash during certain phases of flight.

During early fifties, Flight Lieutenant M J O'Brain was flying Bristol Freighters of No 6 Squadron located at Lahore. Just before one of his flights to Dacca his loadmaster, Sergeant (Sgt) Shah walked up to him and with a triumphant look handed him the trim sheet. M J O'Brain asked Sgt Shah the reason for his exuberance. Sgt Shah replied that he was giving him the CG in the centre which nobody else could have done.

"And how have you achieved this feat, Sgt "queried O'Brian.
"You see that big pallet at the back, I didn't show it in the trim sheet" replied the innovating Sgt, "otherwise the CG would have gone out of the aircraft."

THE PAKISTANI RAID

Group Captain Sultan Arshad

Flight Lieutenant Hasnat Qazi was returning from a low-level bombing mission over India in his Mirage. He approached Mianwali in the pitch dark night with the RED Low Fuel warning light blinking.

Hasnat was desperate to land and asked the Air Traffic Controller to switch the runway lights ON just for a minute. The controller refused, calling on radio that the Base was expecting an Indian raid within minutes.

"If you don't switch on those lights in next 3 seconds, I'm going to blast your bunker with my missiles. Then you won't have to worry about the Indian raid."

The lights came ON before he finished his sentence.

RESCUE SERVICES AIR OFFICERS' STYLE

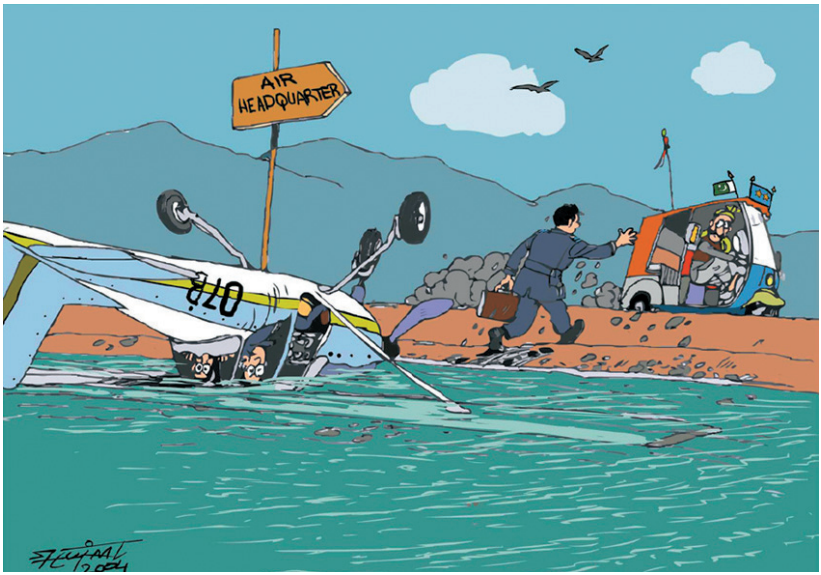
Air Marshal Khursheed A Mirza

In 1986, I was Air Officer Commanding Air Defence Command at Rawalpindi. One evening I got a call from PSO to Chief of the Air Staff that I was required to attend an important meeting at Air Headquarters Peshawar the next morning. Very early the next day, I boarded the 4-seater Cessna 172 and headed for Peshawar. Two very young pilots were on board and since I had flown this aircraft previously, I asked one of the pilots to sit in the rear while I occupied the co-pilot's seat. In the cold January morning, visibility was fairly good and the ride smooth. After crossing overhead Nowshera, we began our descent to land at Peshawar. When we were passing 3000 feet, the engine started juddering and there was partial loss of power. I realized that icing had occurred in the carburettor and pulled out the

carb heat knob to full out position – but it was too late and the engine did not regain power.

We were flying right over the big town of Peshawar. The pilot gave an emergency call and informed the control tower of our intention to force land. Meanwhile, I had taken control of the aircraft and spying a small ground almost half the size of a football field, with tall poplar trees around it, I tried to put the aircraft down. Before the aircraft could be stopped, the field came to a sudden end and the aircraft tumbled into a 3-feet deep water stream. The aircraft turned turtle and jolted to a stop. I unbuckled my seat belt and got out through the cabin window. When I looked back, both the pilots seemed to be hanging like skinned chickens on a Tikka Shop. Presently, about fifteen pathans came running towards us. The first among them, a huge fellow, almost crushed my ribs trying to offer me his congratulations. I told him that while God had saved me from a crash landing, he was going to kill me on the ground.

The time now was 8:00 am and the meeting at the AHQ was scheduled to begin in next ten minutes. We had landed close to



Qila Bala Hissar which is about 3 miles from AHQ and I made the conference room by 8:11, late only by one minute. Everybody was shocked to see me. The CAS, Air Chief Marshal Anwer Shamim looked up from his papers and said"

"Mirza didn't you crash a little while ago"
"Yes Sir, I did", I replied.
The CAS straightened himself up and said:
"Hum, so my rescue services seem to be up to their task. I'm glad that the helicopter picked you up so quickly."
"Sir, apparently not so", I answered,

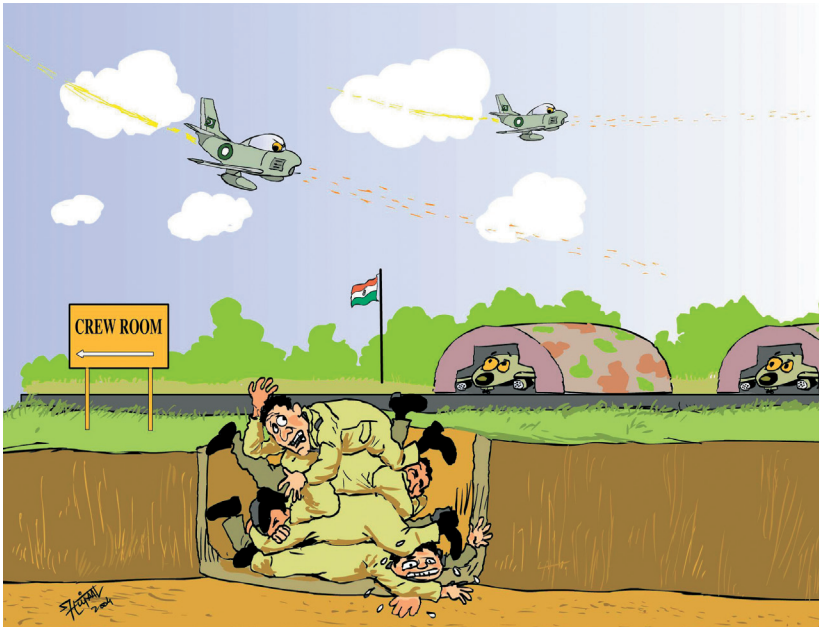
"I took a rickshaw to your office".

WANNA SWITCH PLACES WITH ME

Air Commodore Sajjad Haider

During a recent re-union of 'old boys' at Dera Dhun in India, Air Vice Marshal Sadruddin ran into the gentleman who was the Squadron Commander of the Mig-21 Squadron at Pathankot during the 65 War. Like old professionals, they discussed the PAF attack on the airfield on 6th September. While praising the airfield strike as a model exercise and calling it spectacular, he narrated a little anecdote of his own. He stated the following:¬

There had been no warning for the raid and as the eight PAF aircraft started straffing and rocketing, a doomsday scenario was created. Everyone dropped his cup of tea, map or whatever he was doing and ran for his life. The trench nearest to the pilots 'crew room' was the one most sought-after and in jumped pilot after pilot. The trench was small and the diving pilots piled up on top of each other, almost five of them. The last pilot was almost out of the trench and



was clearly visible from outside his hiding place. Every time as F-86 headed towards the part of the airfield in which lay the trench, the 'top' pilot felt that the F-86 was running specifically for him and 'breath hung' awaited the 2.5 inches rocket or the 0.5 inches cannon that would have his name written on it. Meanwhile, the pressure mounted on the poor pilot who was the quickest into the trench and therefore at the bottom.

As the weight of four of his colleagues began to tell, he felt asphyxiated. Feeling near death he yelled, "I cannot breathe, I cannot breathe, and I am going to suffocate. For Ram's sake do something".

The pilot lying on the top yelled back,
"Wanna switch places".

THE INDIAN RAID

Group Captain Salim Metla

After the 65 War, Indian Air Chief, Air Chief Marshal Arjun Singh came to visit Pakistan at the invitation of Air Marshal Nur Khan, C-in-C PAF. His 10-member delegation included his new ADC Flt Lt Kiriappa, (son of Gen Kiriappa) who had been shot down by the PAF during the war and repatriated to India only a short while ago. While both the Chiefs chatted in the Officers' Mess lawns at Lahore, enjoying the December sunshine, I talked with my counterpart Kiriappa and gave final touches to the buffet lunch arrangements. Keeping in view the sensibilities of Hindu and Sikh religions regarding their abstinence from meat and smoke, we had arranged all available vegetables for them on one side of the table. For ourselves all kind of meat had been laid out towards the other side of the table. The cigarettes were placed on the same side, also for us.

Then we moved in for lunch and the Indian Air Force launched their surprise raid. They ate all our meat with relish and smoked all our cigarettes, with style. We had to eat their vegetables and smoke our own cigarettes.

NEW CAMOUFLAGE

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

Early one wintry morning in 1978, I was flying to Chaklala from Peshawar in a Cessna 172. When I had just crossed Akora Khattak on a south easterly track, Cherat control asked me to change over to Kamra. Kamra tower asked me how the visibility was. "Ten miles–crystal clear," I replied. Now Kamra told me that a special camouflage paint had been applied to two aircraft pens and I was to tell them the distance at which those became visible.

I was a good ten miles away and the runway and its surroundings clearly visible. I tried hard to locate the invisible pens but could not see any unusual coloured pens. Well short of the runway I announced that I could not see any camouflage coloured pens. In fact, I could see only two pens at the far end of the runway 30, which I had picked up at ten miles distance. There was a long pause before Kamra tower replied.

"Those are the pens painted in new camouflage colour".

5 O' CLOCK HIGH

Air Commodore Altaf Sheikh

After launching a pre-dawn attack on an Indian airfield, our B-57 was exiting very low and very fast. It was a pitch dark night with complete blackout but there was sufficient starlight for us to be able to make out the outlines of the terrain rushing below. Since I was concentrating fully on flying, I asked my navigator to keep a good look out for any enemy aircraft lurking in the area that might try to interfere with our exit.

In a few seconds the navigator reported an enemy aircraft 5 o' clock high. Immediately I executed a tight turn to the right and tried to locate the bandit. As I resumed my track, the 'navigator' again shouted that the interceptor was still on our tail and even had his landing lights 'ON'. I executed another steep turn while trying to locate the aircraft, but failed to spot anything. Finally, I recognised the prowler in the pre-dawn light in the east with the bright landing light but kept the identity to myself. Even after crossing the border, the "navigator" continuously reported the 'interceptor' and asked me to get lower and lower - I had been about hugging the ground since our exit. Finally, the navigator could stand it no more and asked to request Sakesar radar for an intercept on the enemy aircraft. I complied with this call:

"Sakesar, my navigator has been seeing an enemy aircraft 5 o' clock high with his landing lights 'ON' since our exit from Halwara. Can you get him off his back please.

"OK, just tell your navigator to stop looking 5 o' clock high. And we'll tell Venus not to chase him anymore. Roger and out"

FORMULA 1

Wing Commander Zafar Iqbal

While I interviewed a senior officer, he repeatedly referred to his wife and asked me that I could confirm everything, he had said, from her. Towards the end of the interview, I asked him if he had ever had a quarrel with wife:

"How can that be," he said. "We sorted out everything right in the beginning".

"And how was that, Sir."

"Very simple. We decided" he said proudly. "That she would make all tactical level decisions and I would make all strategic level decisions."

"Sir could you explain the tactical level," I ventured.

"Yes, why not," he went on. 'Tactical level means that she would decide whether my mother would visit the house or not on weekend or if her mother should be allowed to leave after she has stayed a month. Could my sisters come and stay during the winter vacation and would two months be sufficient for her sister to visit during summer vacation. What would be served with tea when my brother comes and what would be on the dinner menu when her brother is visiting etc".

"And what are the strategic level decisions that you take".

"Oh eg, who would be the next President of the United States, when the Japanese would land on the moon and when would the next elections in Pakistan be held?

TIME MANAGEMENT : AIR FORCE STYLE

Air Marshal Saleem Arshad

When my call-up letter arrived to join the PAF College at Risalpur, it was a summon to join the 3rd short course. On arriving at the College, we found the 3rd short course and 46th GD (P) long course cadets all standing in one line - all 110 of them. And before we could even get down to eating lunch, the 3rd short course had been re-designated the 47th GD (P) course. First lesson in the 'flexibility" of the Air Force.

After the ground schooling when it was time to begin flying all the seats went to 46th GD (P) course,someone at the Air Headquarters having decided to give priority to the long course over the "short course". The third term which should have been flying term for us, became another ground subjects term. A course that was meant to have graduated in a maximum of one year – from being a 'short course', it became longer than a 'long course'. Air Force was really flexible and its – 'Time Management' fantastic.

The next step was to go to No 2 Squadron for advanced jet conversion. On graduating in January 1969, we were told that No 2 Squadron was occupied with 46th GD (P) course and since it was all snow up north, it was a good opportunity for us to attend a "Snow Survival" course. All fourteen of us the graduate of 47th GD (P) course headed to Naltar via PAF Kalabagh. Group Captain Shah Khan kept our days and evening busy and before we knew, the 03 weeks course was over. Even though we sprained a few ankles, we thoroughly enjoyed the course. Then we were sent on ten days leave. While on leave, we were informed that No 2 Squadron was still not in a position to receive us so to manage the time, we were sent for "Sea Survival Course". By March, the sea becomes quite choppy. When we were thrown into the sea from boats, most of us began to vomit. Also we took in a lot of sea water but still we enjoyed because our entire course was together. Then again to manage the time, we

were sent on another ten-day leave. Finally, when we reported to No 2 Squadron, I was shocked to note that despite the fact that we lived in the Officers' Mess and wore officer ranks we were still treated like boots. Same compulsory games, no transport, running up and down and same parade - same language by instructors also. Since we were only fourteen of us, our course was over in three months and once again to manage the time, we were sent on leave. No 26 Squadron was busy with 46th GD (P) course and not ready to accept us.

In July, 1969, we were told to report to Kalabagh for jungle survival; of course again to manage the time and again for three weeks. Once more Group Captain Shah Khan kept us busy, happy and totally occupied. We were then sent on leave, and later reported to Peshawar for the ground course on F-86. Still No 26 Squadron was not ready to receive us, so off we went to Karachi for further ground training in Korangi Creek. Still and yet again No 26 Squadron slots were not available. Quickly and quietly, we were roped around and dispatched to the Kharan desert- for desert survival - again to manage the time. Only then we could get to Peshawar to fly the F-86s.

Now you know the purpose of the four survival courses the PAF runs – just to manage the time, of course.

REVERSAL OF ROLES

Flight Lieutenant Saif

The new Officer Commanding of a radar unit was very eager to impart his knowledge and experience to his subordinates (also to impress them with his gung-ho approach to operations). All Ground Controlled Interception (GCI) mission details were passed on to the boss and usually he would come down to see how the boys were doing, and if necessary he would give them a tip or two.

This fine winter morning, two F-6 fighters were scheduled to fly a GCI mission and the boss was in the ops room with his collars

'up' and zips down. A young Flying Officer tremblingly conducted the first interception. The OC shook his head and motioned a Flight Lieutenant into the controller's chair. His interception also met with a "Not Satisfied" look and the Squadron Leader who followed also met a similar fate. The Officer Commanding then moved into the 'chair' and proceeded to show his flock "an ideal interception". He promptly designated the formation leader as the target and No 2 as the interceptor and then began a series of neat calls and manoeuvres to put the interceptor behind the target.

"Cheetah Leader, this is Tiger Control R/T check", Cheetah Leader Righto zero niner (Standard call was turn right zero niner zero).
"Cheetah Leader check visibility" (Not required but simply to demonstrate his total control over the situation).
"Cheetah Leader, check fuel."

The 'Boss' preferred "Eyeballing" to measure range and bearing and showed a distinct contempt for aids like "Draw lines" and "Range bearing switch provided by the 'Gora Badshah' for the purpose. He also noted a few observations on a paper for the purpose of briefing later on.

His subordinates hung on to each word that he uttered, the Flying Officer vowing to emulate his style later on. The Officer Commanding gave the final commands to the pair and lo and behold, the interceptor was perfectly placed 1 NM in front of the target. Everyone held his breath to see how would the boss pull out of this one. But the boss wasn't finished yet and was the boss. Cool as cucumber, he issued the final instructions.

"Lead with immediate effect you are the interceptor –
No 2 you are the target.
Lead target is now 12 o'clock 1 NM. Call contact."

INFORMATION WARFARE

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

Tariq Habib, a brilliant pilot, was sent to the psychiatrist at Masroor. Those days visiting 'Shrink' was not considered an 'IN' thing as it is considered in Hollywood today. Everyday the psychiatrist would hand Tariq Habib a bundle of test sheets to be filled. Tariq would promptly go to the officers' mess and ¬dish out one test per friend. Next day, he would hand over the bundle to the "Psychiatrist" and collect another one to be processed by his friends.

After two months, he got the cleanest bill of health ever from a Psychiatrist.

GOOD APPROACH

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

While carrying out Instrument Landing System (ILS) approach, the annoyed instructor pilot shouted at the student.

"Why on earth you are not flying the ILS approach properly today? Yesterday your approaches were very good".

"Sir what can I do. Yesterday the visibility was very good and runway visible form 10 NM. Today, I can hardly see a mile", was the innocent reply.

PERFECT ORIENTATION

Air Commodore Javaid Sabir

Flight Lieutenant Riffat Munir was known to always ask his student pilots to identify Khushal Garh Bridge during the navigation missions. When scheduled to fly with Riffat, Junaid Abbasi not his

regular student, was given the dope by his colleagues. Accordingly, he prepared himself mentally to identify the Khushal Garh Bridge. Riffat Munir asked his regular question but at Attock Bridge. Junaid Abbasi was shocked. He looked at the bridge, looked around, looked at the bridge again and said:

"Sir this is NOT Khushal Garh Bridge."

ATC CLEARANCE

Flight Lieutenant Ahmed

Mobile to Tower : One dog about to cross active at 200' marker board.
Tower (At once) : Clear to cross

ABORTING

Squadron Leader Kashif

Student Pilot flying FT-5 Jet trainer to the tower : Jet 128 at take off point aborting due technical.

Tower : Jet 128 go ahead and clear the runway.

The Student Pilot opens full power, accelerates to 120 knots (V1), cuts the throttle to idle, deploys airbrakes, picks up flaps and barely manages to stop short of the barrier, brakes screeching.

Tower to Student Pilot, Jet 128 what the xxx was that ? And why didn't you clear at the first link.

Student Pilot : For what the xxxx refer to the abort procedure in the check list which states :-

Throttle idle, lower nose
Brakes Maximum
Airbrakes deploy
Flaps up

Clear end of the runway.

ALL HUMANS ARE BORN EQUAL

Air Commodore Abdul Ghaffar

Young Mansoor Khan, son of Air Marshal Nur Khan was returning home from school one afternoon when he spied a young gypsy girl carrying a big bundle of wood over her head. His young heart broke into pieces at the sad plight of the beautiful girl. He stopped the official PAF car, asked the driver to load the bundle in the boot and invited the gypsy girl to sit beside him - giving solid proof that all human being are born equal and must be so treated. Before he could reach the Air House, however, the car was stopped again, this time by the Air Force Police; the girl removed and put in the lock up next to the Guard Room. The son argued with - the C-in-C citing arguments in support of his thesis of "equality of all human beings."

"Allow me to put your thesis in practice then", said the C-in-C and had his son also locked up in the cell next to the girl's.

At least two humans became equal

IAF CANBERRA AND THE OUTSTANDING LOAN CARD

Anonymous

Flt Lt Younas had shot down an Indian Canberra on 10 April, 1959; No 6 Squadron was tasked to take the IAF pilots back to India. The Freighter, with Flg Off Abdi as a Navigator, took the downed pilots on stretcher from Lahore to Palam. The army team which handed over the pilots asked Abdi to sign for the stretchers, blankets and pillows also. Abdi promptly signed for the items and the matter was forgotten. Two years later Abdi got a letter from Army informing him that the items were outstanding against his name. He informed

OC who promptly told him to clear the items. On his next flight to Dacca, Abdi met the OC Flying at Palam and asked him for the items. He found the stretchers, blankets and pillows waiting for him all this time, brought them back and cleared the loan card.

FULL THROTTLE

Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroz Khan

It was well-known that Air Marshal Nur Khan knew only three throttle positions. OFF, Idle and Full Up. He took off in an F-86 with Flight Lieutenant Hakimullah as his No 2 and proceeded on route from Peshawar to Mauripur, Karachi. Hakimullah after take off found himself unable to catch up with his Chief.

"Lead this is No 2. Request 2% reduction in power."
No response. After a while.
"Lead this is No 2, I'm lagging. Request 5%."
No response, Again.
"Lead this is No 2. If you don't come back on power I'll lose sight of you."

There was a quick reply, **"If you lose sight of me go and land at Multan."**

Flight Lieutenant Hakimullah landed at Multan.

THE HYPOXIC DOG

Air Vice Marshal Iftikhar A Gul

The first batch of six FT-5 aircraft had reached PAF Base, Masroor in 1975. After assembly and Air Tests, No 1 FCU was formed and planned to be housed at PAF Base, Mianwali. Likewise,

the aircraft along with the manpower were to be shifted from Masroor to Mianwali.

Two days before the movement, my Flt Cdr (Ops) called me in his office and asked me to somehow transport his pet dog to Mianwali by C-130. Abruptly I replied, “No problem. I will manage it”. Later on, I realized that it was easier said than done. There were many hurdles to cross, such as, duping the security staff, hoodwinking the Air Movement control and finally deluding the load master.

I devised a plan; it was simple. Get some medicine from a veterinary doctor and put the dog to sleep for about 3-4 hours. Also, I arranged a cardboard box, made holes in it for the dog’s free and easy breathing. Thereafter, I looked for a tool box to put the dog in it so as to avoid any checking by the loadmaster. On the day of ferry, the dog was drugged, put in the cardboard box and the card box locked into a

tool kit was quietly loaded on the C-130. I was happy that the Project Airlift of Flt Cdr's Dog" was successfully accomplished. However, as usual, the C-130 got late. The delay of three hours caused the effect of the medicine to wear off and the dog began to protest its imprisonment. The loadmaster immediately threw the tool box out of the C-130 and we were back to square one. A council of war was held in the Flight Commander's office and a new course of action finalized. Depending upon others is not a way of life for the brave. Therefore, it was agreed, that the dog would fly – just as the Flight Cdr will fly. We seated the dog in the rear seat of the Flt Cdr's FT-5 aircraft and strapped him up. Then I administered to him the second dose of medicine and put him to sleep again. We agreed that there was no requirement for a helmet. To complete the drill, the Flight Surgeon checked the dog, found it snoozing and declared it fit to "Fly".

The ferry to Mianwali was uneventful. After landing, I rushed to the aircraft, took out the box and brought the dog out of it. Promptly, the dog collapsed on the ground. The poor thing had no strength in its legs. May be it was due to the side effects of the anaesthesia or lack of oxygen - or perhaps the comfort of FT-5 ferry had done it to him. Quickly, Flight Lieutenant Shams made a mask out of an old magazine and put it on the dog's mouth and I released pure oxygen from the oxygen trolley. The dog was quick to respond and stood on its feet. The dog then started walking but it was walking in circles and giving a drunken look. We tried to make him walk straight but he failed the alcohol test and continued to walk anti-clockwise. After another dose of pure oxygen – it started walking in a zigzag manner and another dose later, it began to walk normally. Then the dog was handed over to Sqn Ldr Bashir who took it proudly to an anxiously waiting Mrs Bashir. The drama may have ended here for most of the players but not for me.

Early the next morning the Base Commander,
Air Cdre Arshad, summoned me.
What happened in his office, I positively refuse to
share over here.

Printed at: The Army Press - Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 2351135-37